MILF rebels shell town; ceasefire in peril

Story on Page A2

Limitless blood in the pipeline

WASHINGTON—In the future, the perennial shortage of blood supply in US hospitals should no longer pose a problem to patients who need surgery.

So with leukemia and cancer patients who need blood or bone marrow transplants but find it difficult to get matching donor cells.

For the first time in history, US scientists have found a way to turn embryonic human

LIMITLESS/ A4

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INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2001 ★ 54 PAGES 4 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 269 ₱15

RP texting fever spreads to HK

HONG KONG—The texting fever in the Philippines has spread abroad, exported by Filipinos who want to keep in constant touch with their loved ones through an inexpensive medium.

RP/ A4

MALUNGKOT SI INAY

Oust-Lacson drive starts

Zambales folk warned of massive lahar flow

15M cubic meters of water released Thursday

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

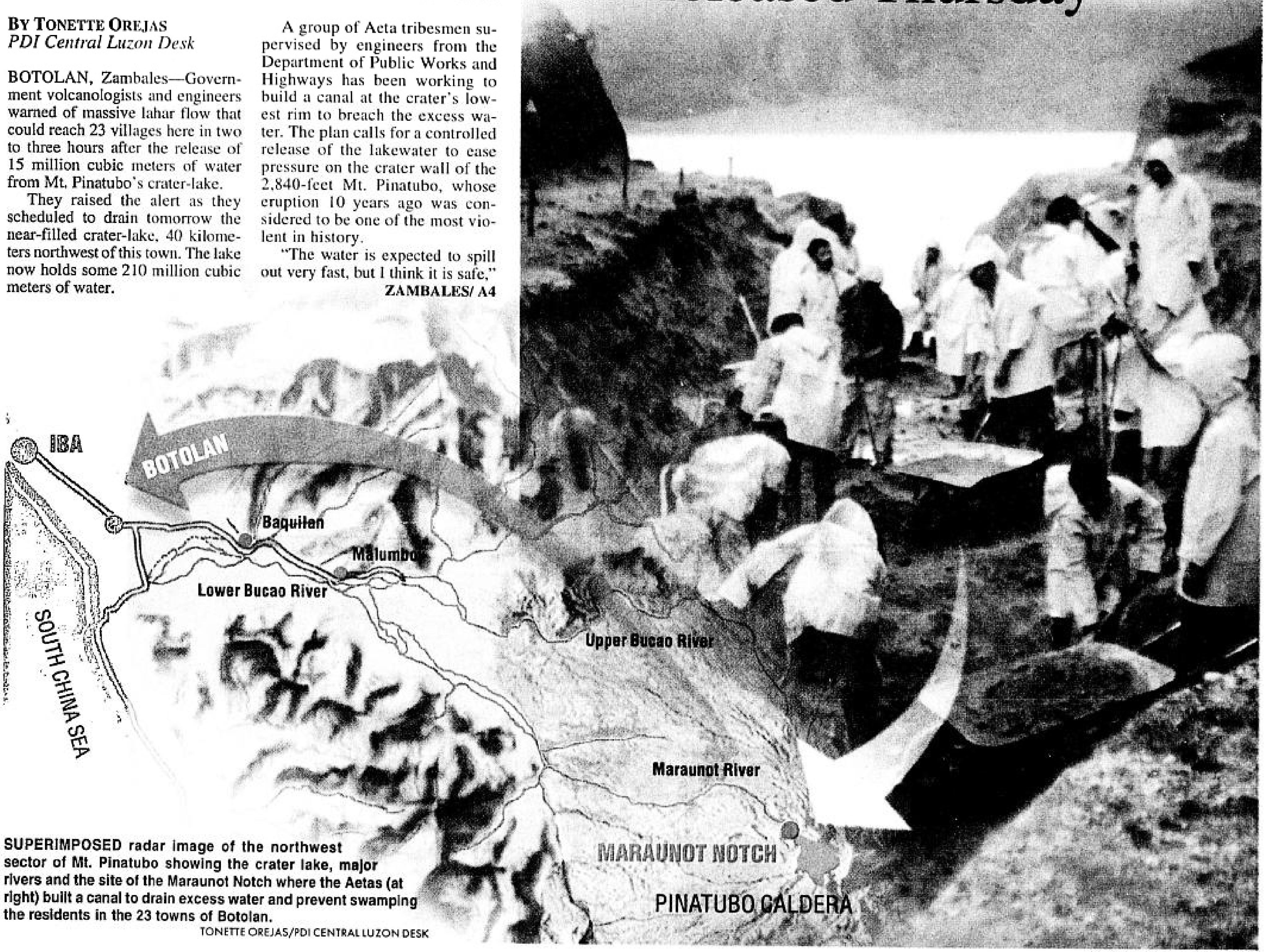
BOTOLAN, Zambales—Government volcanologists and engineers warned of massive lahar flow that could reach 23 villages here in two to three hours after the release of 15 million cubic meters of water from Mt. Pinatubo's crater-lake.

They raised the alert as they scheduled to drain tomorrow the near-filled crater-lake, 40 kilometers northwest of this town. The lake now holds some 210 million cubic meters of water.

A group of Aeta tribesmen supervised by engineers from the Department of Public Works and Highways has been working to build a canal at the crater's lowest rim to breach the excess water. The plan calls for a controlled release of the lakewater to ease pressure on the crater wall of the 2,840-feet Mt. Pinatubo, whose eruption 10 years ago was considered to be one of the most violent in history.

"The water is expected to spill out very fast, but I think it is safe,"

ZAMBALES/ A4



SUPERIMPOSED radar image of the northwest sector of Mt. Pinatubo showing the crater lake, major rivers and the site of the Maraunot Notch where the Aetas (at right) built a canal to drain excess water and prevent swamping the residents in the 23 towns of Botolan.

TONETTE OREJAS/PDI CENTRAL LUZON DESK

INQGRAPHIC: MRUBIO/ESAMBO

Almonte back with Edsa II coalition

By Carlito Pablo

THE GROUPS that helped oust disgraced President Joseph Estrada have set their sights on Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

In a summit held yesterday at the historic Club Filipino in San Juan and sponsored by the People's Consultative Assembly (PCA) and De La Salle Brothers, civil-society, cause-oriented and religious groups, along with retired military and police officers, again joined forces, this time to work for Lacson's expulsion or resignation from the Senate.

They also launched a "P5 per sticker campaign drive against narco-politics." The sticker, featuring an exclamation point, comes in two versions—one with the initials "EL" (Expel Lacson), and the other with "LR" (Lacson resign).

The PCA issued a statement denying claims by certain quarters that it was forming a civilian-military junta.

It said parties engaged in the drug trade were peddling this line to muddle the ongoing investigation of Lacson and his alleged associates in drug trafficking and other high crimes.

The speakers at the "Narco-Politics Summit: A Clear and Present Danger" were Col. Victor Corpus, chief of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines; government witness Mary Ong alias Rosebud; and retired Gen. Jose Almonte, national security adviser of then President Fidel Ramos.

In a resolution, the summit participants said Lacson's alleged in-

OUST-LACSON/ A15

What else is new? says Ping

By Armand N. Nocum

SEN. Panfilo Lacson yesterday said there was no reason for him to resign because his accusers had no grounds to pin him down.

Asked to comment on a newly formed movement seeking his resignation or expulsion from the Senate, Lacson said he knew himself better as someone who had never gotten involved in drug trafficking, money laundering, kidnapping and other crimes.

"That's their opinion . . . All people are entitled to their opinion," he told reporters. "I'll respect that, but I will not resign. There is no basis for me to resign. I have not done anything wrong."

The movement, composed of groups that had actively sought the ouster of Joseph Estrada, said it

WHAT/ A15

Lacson to question accusers

By Armand N. Nocum and Christine Avendaño

SEN. PANFILO Lacson will finally face his accusers today not to answer their charges but to confront them with the "inconsistent and contradictory statements" that they made during the previous hearings of the Senate panels investigating Lacson's alleged crimes.

Lacson said he would attend the hearing fully prepared to discredit the claims of military intelligence chief Col. Victor Corpus, former anti-narcotics agent Mary "Rosebud" Ong and Angelo "Ador" Mawanay, who claims to be a former PAOCTF civilian agent.

Before the expected confrontation between Lacson and his accusers, the Senate will hold a closed-door hearing to listen to the testimonies of five new witnesses against Lacson.

Sen. Robert Barbers, chair of the Senate committee on public order and illegal drugs, said the new witnesses could corroborate the testimonies of previous witnesses that

LACSON/ A15

LR
LACSON RESIG

FAMILIAR faces from Edsa II join forces like Col. Victor Corpus and retired Gen. Jose T. Almonte.

JOAN BONDOC

Lacson files 2 libel suits vs Corpus, PDI

By Armand N. Nocum and Carlito Pablo

COL. Victor Corpus and the INQUIRER now face three libel cases in connection with the publication of news reports linking ousted President Joseph Estrada and Sen. Panfilo Lacson to money laundering, drug trafficking and other crimes.

Lacson yesterday said he filed on Monday a P30-million civil case in the Makati Regional Trial Court and a criminal case in the Las Piñas Regional Trial Court against the military intelligence chief and the country's leading newspaper.

"I filed the cases yesterday . . . quietly and without fanfare," he told Senate reporters.

Ousted President Joseph Estrada on Monday also filed in the Pasig

LACSON FILES/ A4

Rosebud ready, too: Truth is on my side

By Carlito Pablo and Jhunnex Napallacan

"ARE you ready to face me?"

Former civilian anti-narcotics agent Mary "Rosebud" Ong yesterday posed the question to Sen. Panfilo Lacson who had earlier announced that he would finally attend the Senate hearing today on the serious charges leveled against him.

Ong said the "truth" was on her side and that Lacson "will never be able to twist the truth."

Speaking at yesterday's summit "Narco-Politics: A Clear and Present Danger" at the Club Filipino in Greenhills, San Juan, Ong said she was prepared to face Lacson whom she had linked to drug trafficking, kidnapping for ransom and summary executions.

Responding to a query whether she was ready for a confrontation with the former head of the

ROSEBUD/ A15

Acop admits cops used 'tawas' for photo-ops

By Christine Herrera

CHIEF Supt. Reynaldo Acop yesterday admitted that the police used several kilos of "*tawas* (alum) in place of *shabu* (methamphetamine hydrochloride) when they presented "evidence" seized from drug traffickers to the media.

The former chief of the Philippine National Police Narcotics Group denied the allegations of Mary "Rosebud" Ong that his men "recycled" *shabu* by selling them and replacing the real thing with *tawas* during the presentation of evidence.

Acop said the use of *tawas*, whose color and texture are similar to *shabu*, was done for "security reasons."

He said it would be "foolhardy" for the police to transport hundreds of kilos of *shabu* from the crime laboratory, where the substance was held for safekeeping, to where the press conferences were held.

"If real *shabu* is transported each time there is a press conference, several men are unnecessarily tapped to secure it," Acop said. "That's expensive and counterproductive."

He said the police did not want to expose the evidence to danger. "For example, every time there is a major drug haul and a press conference is announced, drug syn-

ACOP/ A15

Now, Rosebud targets Ang-See

By Christine Herrera

COULD the celebrated anti-kidnapping crusader be covering up for the alleged kidnapping mastermind?

Former undercover agent Mary "Rosebud" Ong yesterday accused high-profile anti-crime advocate Teresita Ang-See of trying to "cover up" for Sen. Panfilo Lacson and his alleged

NOW/ A15

SAYANG ANG KASUNDUAN

Second FRONT PAGE

Moro rebels shell town; truce in peril

COTABATO CITY—Moro separatist guerrillas fired mortar shells at Datu Piang town in Maguindanao province, again endangering a fragile truce with the government, the military said yesterday.

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front fired 60mm and 81mm mortars at the outlying areas of Datu Piang on Monday and Tuesday, displacing 400 families, Armed Forces spokesperson Major Julieto Ando said.

Ando said the military used helicopter gunships to blast the MILF mortar positions. He could not give casualty figures.

Although the shelling had ceased by yesterday morning, stray gunfire could still be heard echoing in the town, about 80 km south of Cotabato City.

The shelling was the latest in a series of skirmishes in Datu Piang in recent days despite a truce signed between the rebel group and the government in Kuala Lumpur last month to pave the way for peace talks.

It was also the second time the MILF fired mortar shells at the town. Two weeks ago, the rebel group shelled Datu Piang in support of a Muslim clan involved in a personal feud.

Ando said the mortar attack was an attempt by the MILF to divert the military's attention away from its assault on the guerrillas, following violence that erupted at the weekend.

Both MILF and government leaders called for "normalization" of the town to prevent a large-scale war.

"Otherwise, if this goes on, the peace talks will be affected," said MILF political affairs chief Ghadzali Jaafar, as he called for a halt to the fighting and sought the establishment of a local ceasefire.

He called the military operations a "major breach" of the ceasefire accord.

The latest fighting would top the agenda for the peace talks to be held in Malaysia this month, Jaafar added without giving details.

Presidential Assistant for Mindanao Jesus Dureza, who is also chair of the government peace panel, also appealed to the MILF and the military to "tie up your rifles so that we can normalize the situation."

He said he had spoken with Jaafar and had discussed with him how the situation in Datu Piang can be normalized to prevent the skirmishes from escalating.

Jaafar said a localized ceasefire should be observed first before the ceasefire monitoring team composed of representatives from the government, the MILF and the Organization of Islamic Conference can come in.

"It should be investigated and both sides should refrain from issuing provocative statements and provocative acts," he said.

The violence started when the MILF, allied with a local Muslim clan in the area, clashed with a rival clan that has its own Moro rebel allies.

The military tried to intervene but became caught up in the fighting on Saturday. Fifteen rebels have been killed and two soldiers wounded in clashes between troops and the MILF so far.

Thousands of villagers fled to the town center for fear of getting caught in the crossfire. *AFP, with a report from Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

3 killed, 9 wounded in Pagadian blast

PAGADIAN CITY—Three people, including two policemen, were killed while nine others were wounded when a bomb exploded inside a bus terminal here yesterday morning.

One of those injured was the city's deputy police chief, Senior Insp. Jolly Sagun.

Killed were policemen Beljoe Carator and Humberto Remoto, who were trying to move the bomb.

The third fatality was 17-year-old Ryan Akiatan, a student at the Simata National High School in Molave, Zamboanga del Sur.

Crisanto Omay, a bus helper at the Cerilles Bus Terminal, said he saw a box wrapped in adhesive tape under a Dannylyn Bus unit at around 7:45 a.m.

Omay said he picked up the box but was alarmed when he saw two wires attacked to it.

Policemen then took the bomb out of the terminal, meaning to take it to the city wharf and throw it to sea.

But just as Carator placed the bomb inside a police patrol car, it exploded, killing the policeman and the patrol car's driver, Remoto.

Akiatan was hit by a shrapnel on the throat.

Wounded were Abusama Ibrahim, 27; Jacob Mohammad, 27; Dierosel Laride, 17; Dierosel Tambos, 45; and her granddaughter Norjean, 4; Leo Añasco, 21; and Teodulfo Solas, 50.

. Mayor Warlito Pulmones, who was inside his car, which was parked some 200 yards away, said the blast was so strong that it destroyed the police patrol car.

Chief Insp. Dionesio Perdiguez Jr., city police chief, said the explosive was similar to the bomb planted at a police outpost in Barangay Tiguma here last year, which killed eight people.

In June, another bomb was found and detonated at the Cerilles Bus Terminal, which is owned by former Environment Secretary Antonio Cerilles and his wife, Zamboanga del Sur Gov. Aurora Cerilles.

A three-member investigation team from Zamboanga City arrived here yesterday to help local police.

"We will reconstruct at the crime scene what kind of bomb the bombers used," said Chief Supt. Simeon Dizon, police chief for Western Mindanao. *Hernan P. dela Cruz, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Broadcaster found beaten up

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Kidnapped Butuan City broadcaster Nolie Ebarle has been freed by his abductors but only after being beaten up, he said yesterday.

Ebarle, 32, station manager of Radio dxBC of the Radio Mindanao Network, was found by a tricycle driver on Monday evening in a isolated area in Sitio Kabalungan, Talisayan town, Misamis Oriental.

He was found bruised, hogtied and suffering from dehydration.

Ebarle, whose real name is Noel Esin, said in a radio interview that he was abducted at gunpoint by two armed men last Saturday while traveling to Butuan City from Cagayan de Oro.

He said he was stuffed into a van and kept blindfolded with a rifle barrel shoved against his cheek. The armed men took his wristwatch and cellular phone and "manhandled" him, he said.

Late Monday, his abductors dumped the blindfolded and hogtied Ebarle in the isolated area. He screamed for help and was found.

Asked why he was abducted, Ebarle said, "I'm sorry but these are things I cannot mention on the air."

However, he hinted that his abduction was related to his criticism on radio of illegal logging, drug trafficking and policemen who allegedly moonlight as bodyguards of businessmen without the permission of their superiors.

Recounting the kidnapping, Armel Lozada, a colleague of Ebarle, said the radio broadcaster was on the air when he was cut short.

The last words he uttered were "*agay... agay*," (ouch! ouch!), said Lozada.

Lozada said he thought Ebarle had stumbled and fallen, but when repeated attempts to contact him failed, they started to worry.

Lozada said he later received a text message in Cebuano saying that "Noli is in our hands."

An hour later, dxBC, also known as Radyo Agong, received a call saying: "Agong, *naa sa amo si* Noli (Agong, Noli is with us)."

Station employees notified the manager, James Jadormio, who called the Caraga police.

Ebarle's family said they suspect that the people behind his kidnapping were the subjects of his commentaries and exposes.

Ebarle is said to have been receiving death threats, the latest of which came after his exposé on the "Bamboo Gang," a drug syndicate operating in Butuan City.

Jadormio said Ebarle had tagged "Boy, Ernesto, George and Quintin" as being behind the gang.

Police said they were following the leads provided by the radio station. *AFP and Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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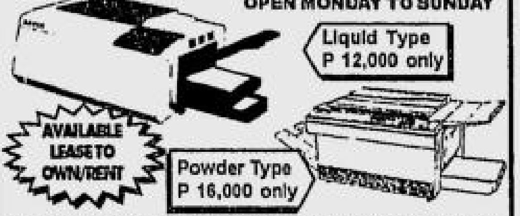

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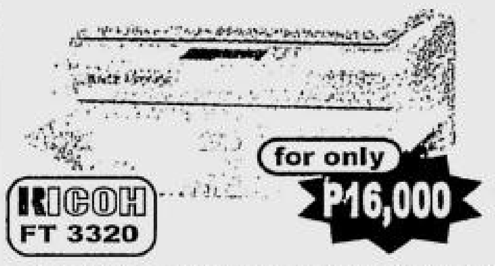

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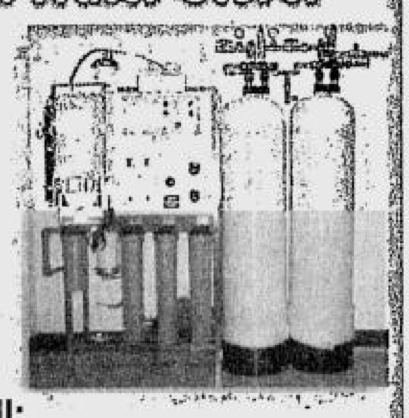

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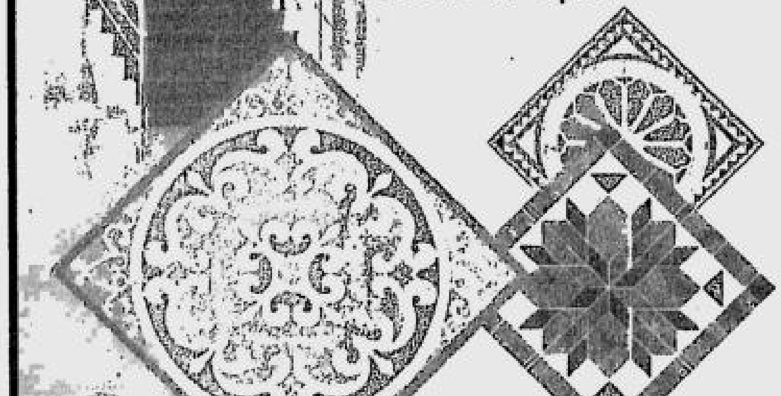

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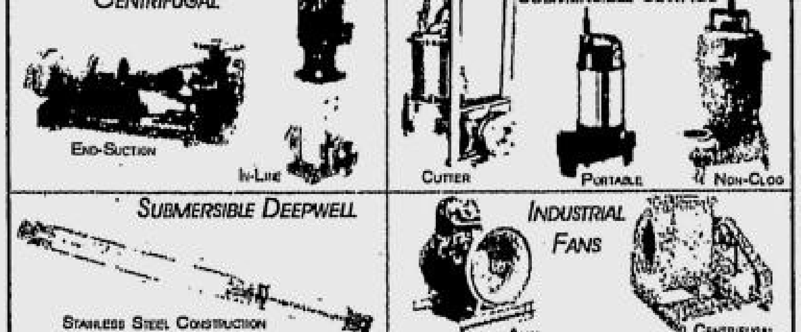

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'ALL QUIET'

Gloria visits Marines amid coup talk

By Martin Marfil and Carlito Pablo

AS MALACANANG yesterday continued to dismiss reports of a coup d'etat as mere rumors being spread by a public relations group, President Macapagal-Arroyo met with Marine officials Monday night.

Palace officials claimed no knowledge of the President's meeting with the Marines, but commander of the Marines confirmed the meeting.

Ms Macapagal visited the Marine headquarters in Fort Bonifacio in Makati and conferred with officers, according to Marine Commandant Maj. Gen. Librado Ladia.

"She can visit us anytime because she is Commander-in-Chief," Ladia said.

Ladia said that they simply tackled the ongoing military operations against the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan.

"Very briefly," Ladia said when asked how long the meeting went with the President.

When asked if President Macapagal's visit had something to do with coup rumors, Ladia said: "She doesn't need to be worried because the Marines are solidly behind the present administration."

Called the "dogs of war," the Marines are considered the toughest unit in the Armed Forces.

Some Marine units have been involved in the failed coup attempts against the administration of former President Corazon Aquino.

Asked to comment on persistent coup rumors, the deputy presidential spokesperson said she had checked with the spokesperson of the AFP who told them that everything was quiet in the camps.

"There is no such thing (troop movement). It's so quiet and peaceful here," said Abel de Leon, assistant presidential spokesperson, quoting AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan.

On the President's visit to the Marine headquarters, De Leon said that Adan told her that they had no report on that.

For his part, presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said in a telephone interview that he could not confirm the meeting.

Tiglao, who had blamed reports of a brewing coup on an unidentified group of public relations practitioners, refused to divulge more details about the supposed plan.

Asked if Malacañang was planning to use a PR firm owned by Dante Ang, who is perceived to be close to the administration, to counter the coup rumors, Tiglao said there was no such plan.

He pointed out that Malacañang already has a spokesperson, like the AFP, and there was no need for the PR firm.

"I don't think it's a matter of PR. We believe we could rely on facts... All we need to do is really to present the facts, to point out the argument," he said.

Palace writers banned from Cabinet meets

By Martin P. Marfil

MALACAÑANG has banned its own writers from attending Cabinet meetings.

The ban has been in effect for the past three weeks.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said it was the Presidential Management Staff that instituted the ban, justifying it by saying that the State Dining Room where the meetings are held was "overcrowded."

He added the ban had the approval of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Veteran Palace reporters said this is the first time that writers from Malacañang's own Presidential News Desk had been banned from Cabinet meetings.

One PND writer usually sits in while the Cabinet discusses the agenda, they said.

The PND writer then usually briefs the reporters to enable radio reporters to send out their initial stories.

Under the present setup, reporters have to wait until the 3:30 or 4 p.m. briefing.

Malacañang believes the ban is justified.

"The idea is that those attending the meeting should be restricted, which is understandable. It's a big group," Tiglao said during a press briefing.

He said that having a group that large risks misinterpretation, as in a spirited discussion being reported as a quarrel.

To the comment that only one PND writer was required to meet the needs of the press corps, Tiglao pointed out that there are already 24 Cabinet members, each with a complement of aides and assistants.

"Most probably, the PMS evaluated the procedures, the organization in the Cabinet meeting and, from their point of view, it had become unwieldy. Cabinet meetings should have a certain decorum and strictness," Tiglao explained.

Asked if the decision had been prompted by "leaks," Tiglao said it was not, adding that he didn't even notice that no PND writer was present at the Cabinet meetings.

He added that it was not because Malacañang did not trust its own people.

"If the press needs some information on what happened, the press secretary is there, I'm also in the meeting," he said.

He said the PMS had the right to limit the number of people attending meetings as it supervises all the meetings.

House OKs first bill

THE HOUSE of Representatives has approved on second reading a new Rent Control Law.

HB 214, or the Act Establishing Reforms in the Regulation of Rentals of Certain Residential Units, sets a 10 percent limit on rental increases to be imposed for the three years after the law takes effect on Jan. 1, 2002.

The 10 percent-limit on rent increases is to be imposed on residential units with monthly rentals of P9,000 in Metro Manila and other highly urbanized cities and P6,000 for other areas.

The 10 percent increase will be computed on a cumulative basis.

Rent payments exceeding P9,000 in urban areas and P6,000 in rural areas are not covered by the new law.

Bukidnon Rep. Miguel Zubiri said the new law would benefit not only those leasing residential units but also those renting space in dormitories, boarding houses and bed space units.

"It is going to benefit approximately three million lessees nationwide, from students to low-income families," said Zubiri.

The new law takes over from RA 8437, which imposed a 15 percent limit on rent increases for units constructed in 1984 or earlier. *Rocky Nazareno*

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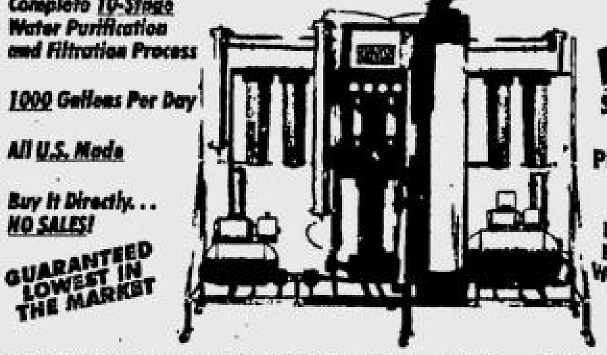

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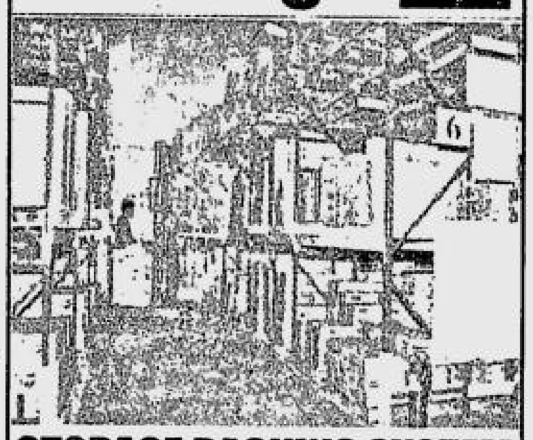

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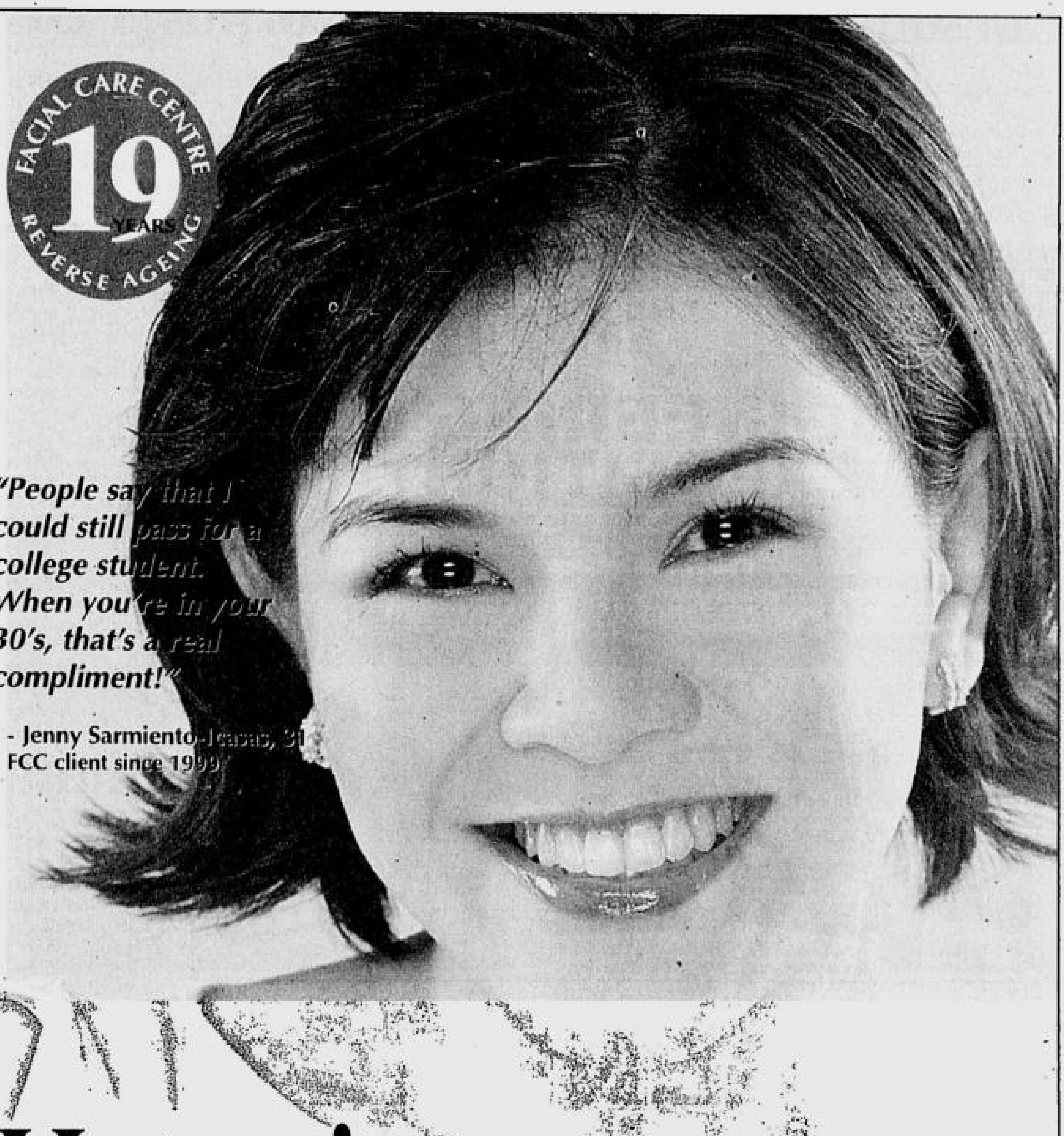

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Zambales folk warned of massive lahar flow

(From page A1)

volcanologist Raymundo Punongbayan said, adding that the canal's base is supported by hard rock "stronger than concrete."

A similar project had been successfully carried out in Indonesia's Kelut volcano, Punongbayan said, while noting that Pinatubo is about five or six times bigger.

If everything goes smoothly, breaching of the excess water could take anywhere between five or six hours to several days, he said.

In the upland and lowland villages, more than 50 teams of rescue workers from government and non-government organizations were rushing the evacuation of 46,000 residents to higher ground.

This was the second mass flight of the residents from a disaster since Pinatubo erupted 10 years ago.

At the 3-km. wide crater-lake, the water level was rising by an average of 10 centimeters daily due to heavy rains around the volcano.

"We are not going to let the water out until everybody's ready," geologist Ernesto Corpuz, head of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) volcano monitoring and eruption prediction group, told the INQUIRER on Sunday.

Corpuz leads a team of 20 government volcanologists, engineers and Aetas who will remain on the Maraunot notch to oversee the breaching of a canal near the crater-lake.

Rush job

With picks and shovels, 96 Aetas from Zambales and Tarlac rushed to build the canal, working 12 hours daily, despite the rains and the lack of sufficient government funds.

They used a gas-powered water pump that eroded the soft soil on the notch's bedrock.

After the construction was completed on Monday, many of the Aetas started descending along the O'Donnel River on the Tarlac side of the volcano.

They, too, wanted to go home fast to be able to secure their families, according to Aeta leader Willy Bulanhigan.

Many of the workers were made ill by the gusty winds and intermittent heavy rains.

The team has left a 1.5-meter gap on the crater's lowest rim, expecting to dig it down to the level of the water surface when Botolan local officials signal the start of the breaching.

Final digging

Botolan officials will relay the go signal through a two-way radio installed on the notch's hill. The communication system has been working efficiently since the start of the construction, it was learned.

When the signal reaches the team on the summit, Corpuz said the skeletal team of 10 Aetas will begin the final digging starting at 5 a.m., commencing the overflow at possibly 7 a.m.

"We hope that the weather will be good and the day will be sunny," he said.

But the canal, according to Corpuz, may also be opened even during bad weather.

"If the weather will not cooperate, we will have to make do. But what is important is that Botolan officials will have to say they're ready and the evacuation is complete. Then we can start the overflow process," he said.

Evacuation

Classes, offices and work have been suspended since Monday to give the residents time to prepare, according to Mayor Roger Yap.

More than 2,000 Aeta families from the villages of Villar, Loob-Bunga, Malomboy, Moraza and Burgos, have been moved to evacuation centers in government-managed resettlement sites in the highland areas.

Candida Cabinta, provincial chief of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, said the families were transferred away from the Maraunot and Bucao rivers where the new rampages of volcanic sediments are expected to flow and drain out to the South China Sea.

Food supplies for the evacuees were coming from the Philippine National Red Cross and the National Disaster Coordinating Council, Yap said.

At the town proper, residents have moved to the homes of their relatives in the towns of Iba, San Narciso and San Felipe, it was learned. Many families who live in two-story houses have preferred to stay.

Corpuz said "evacuation was important," reckoning that, on a conservative estimate, water will scour voluminous old volcanic deposits to form thick lahar that will "reach Botolan in two or three hours."

Geologist Mariton Bornas, whose team completed a study last January on the crater-lake problem, expected rapid discharge that the notch, which has acted as a natural dam in the last 10 years, "cannot withstand."

Anticipating strong erosion as a result of the release of water, Corpuz said the width of the canal has been narrowed from 4 to 2 meters "to allow nature to do its part and widen the trench."

Acop vows to destroy Mary's credibility

By Christine Herrera

CHIEF Supt. Reynaldo Acop yesterday vowed to destroy the credibility of former undercover agent Mary "Rosebud" Ong by presenting counter-evidence at the Senate hearing today where he is expected to answer charges of drug trafficking, kidnap-for-ransom and summary executions.

Acop, former chief of the Narcotics Group of the Philippine National Police, said his counterparts in the US Drug Enforcement Agency, particularly Jeff Mendling, head of the Manila country office, were "aware" of every major drug shipment made by the Chinese triad in the Philippines.

The narcotics intelligence groups in Australia, Macau, Taiwan and Hong Kong were also cooperating with the Philippine counterparts, he said.

"The foreign counterparts, particularly the US DEA, know every major drug shipment of the Chinese triad in the Philippines because they want to diminish, if not, totally eliminate the illegal activities of the triad in the Asia-Pacific," Acop said.

In fact, he said, it was the Hong Kong Narcotics Police that tipped off the PNP NarcGroup of the major drug shipment of *shabu* by drug lord and triad member Wong Kam Chong off the waters of Mindoro in 1999.

However, Acop said, contrary to Ong's revelation, only 121 kilos of shabu were recovered from that "single" shipment. The shipment, he said, was accounted for.

But Ong yesterday stood by her claim that the 220-kilo shabu shipment was different from the 121 kilos that Acop was referring to.

Acop said the Bantay Dagat in Mindoro accidentally intercepted the contraband, prompting members of the triad to throw the shipment into the sea. He said the police recovered only 40 kilos.

The rest of the shipment was recovered either by fishermen or by some enterprising individuals who got hold of information that a major drug shipment had gone awry, according to Acop.

He said the fishermen surrendered to the police the shabu they had recovered. A series of buy-bust operations also resulted in the recovery of the rest of the shipment.

Ong stressed that she was in possession of several tapes showing that between Oct. 9 and Nov. 9, 1998 triad members were discussing the "missing" 220 kilos.

She said the tapes were the result of the wiretapping that Acop's group did on the triad members.

Based on the taped conversations of the drug syndicate members, another shipment was to take place in December 1998, according to Ong.

"There were a series of major drug shipments that happened between October 1998 and the whole of 1999 as part of the Cyclops operation," Ong said.

"All these happened off the waters of Mindoro as the triad and Acop's group found it to be the best point of entry considering that Acop was assigned in Region 4 and therefore Lacson's Special Warfare Group was amply protected to recover the drugs," she said.

"Look, Acop can account for the 121 kilos because that single shipment was accidentally intercepted not by his group but by other groups 'not in the know.' The other shipments simply vanished, especially those when he was the Regional Director of Region 4," Ong said.

Acop said he would submit to the Senate after operation reports regarding the 121-kilo shipment of *shabu* and certification from evidence custodians that the illegal drugs were properly accounted for.

He noted that two Chinese nationals smuggling the contraband into the country had been arrested and were currently detained in Mindoro.

Acop said it was "impossible to believe" Ong's claim that drug lords being detained in Camp Crame continued to deal in drugs.

Lacson files 2 libel suits vs Corpus, PDI

(From page A1)

City Regional Trial Court a P20-million libel suit against Corpus and the INQUIRER in connection with the same news reports.

Estrada's lawyers said they also planned to file a criminal case.

But Corpus, head of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, said the filing of the libel cases would allow him to prove in court his serious charges against Estrada and Lacson.

Lacson said respondents in the libel suit included INQUIRER publisher Isagani Yambot, editor in chief Letty Magsanoc, Metro editors Louie Camino and Recah Trinidad, columnist Ramon Tulfo and reporter Christine Herrera.

Respondents in Estrada's libel case included Yambot, Magsanoc, Herrera, managing editor Jose Ma. Nolasco, and reporter Carlito Pablo.

In his talk with reporters, Lacson said he was not losing sleep over Corpus' charges against him.

"I can sleep well because my conscience is clear. I derive my strength from God," he said.

"I'm sure my accusers can come up with nothing because I'm not a bad person," the senator added.

Corpus reaction

During the hearing of Estrada's libel case, Corpus said he would prove in court that the ousted President had transferred money from his Jose Velarde account in multibillion-peso Equitable-PCI Bank to his Hong Kong account in Citibank.

"We have expected the case," Corpus said. "I'm glad we now have a chance to prove that portions of the Jose Velarde account were transferred to Hong Kong."

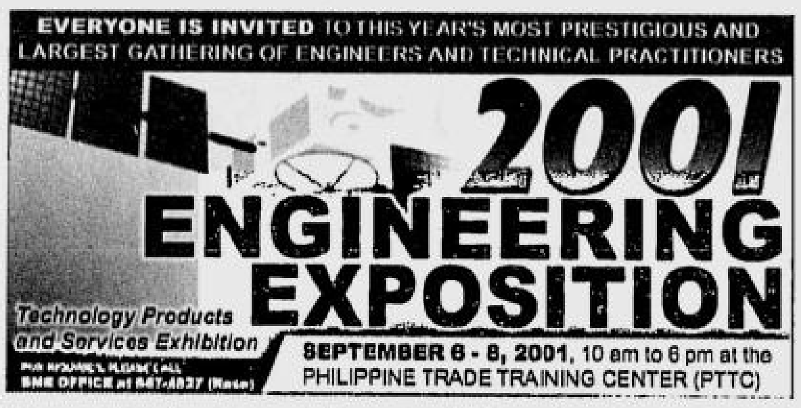
The libel suit stemmed from the INQUIRER's banner story on Aug. 5 that Estrada, his wife Sen. Loi Ejercito, Lacson and his wife Alice had 18 personal and joint accounts in Hong Kong, the United States and Canada with deposits totaling $728.5 million.

Corpus said the huge dollar stash came from organized crime activities like drug trafficking, kidnapping for ransom and smuggling.

Speaking at a summit of cause oriented groups at Club Filipino in San Juan, Corpus said that media had a big role in combating what he referred to as "narco-politics."

Corpus said that the "court of public opinion" would render justice to Lacson's alleged crimes if the regular courts failed to do so.

"Media will be at the forefront in the war against narco-politics," he said. "This is information warfare."



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RP texting fever . . .

(From page A1)

Hong Kong parks on Sundays have always been filled with Filipino domestic helpers partying on their day off. But today, these Filipinas not only socialize with their fellow Filipinos in Hong Kong; many are also touching base with people back home via mobile phones—without saying a word.

Tapping tiny keyboards, the Filipinas text short messages to their family and friends at a cost far less than that of an international long-distance call.

Text-only messages have become a phenomenon in the Philippines, giving ordinary folks access to regular global communications they otherwise could not afford.

While also immensely popular in places like Scandinavia, texting has been a godsend for the Philippines' many overseas workers.

Jeanet Salvador, who comes from Tarlac but has been a live-in maid in Hong Kong for 11 years, texts her mother every morning.

"I say 'Hi,' 'Good morning,' 'Good afternoon,' that's all," she said.

Text messaging is a feature now widely available on digital cell phones—especially those that use GSM technology, the dominant cell phone standard in Asia and Europe, where the version used is called Short Message Service, or SMS.

100 million daily

Growth has been explosive.

Globe Telecom estimates that Filipinos exchange 100 million text messages daily. And many users live outside their homeland.

One shorthand digital message, which can contain a maximum of 160 characters, costs one peso. A message sent abroad costs P10.

Texting is cheaper than voice calling and more affordable than e-mail because there's no need to obtain Internet access or own a computer.

Text messages are carried over cell phone networks far more efficiently than phone calls. Unlike phone conversations, which tie up considerable bandwidth for a call's duration, text messages are sent as small bursts of data.

For businesses, too

Outside the Robinson's Place in Manila, businessman Abe Salem stopped to talk to a reporter—right after receiving a text greeting from a friend in Laguna.

Salem uses text messaging in his international recruitment agency, which dispatches Filipinos to work as laborers or maids in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Bahrain.

He takes orders by text and then confirms he can provide Filipinos to households and businesses wanting them.

"It's cheaper than a phone and faster," Salem said. "Employers need housemaids or workers. They text us. They say they need four or five and we send them."

As Filipinos land overseas, they take the texting culture with them.

Jokes spread like wildfire, lovers stay in touch from afar and texters entertain each other by sending out tiny graphics and cartoons that can be stored in a phone and then sent on to others.

Politics, too

Texting is believed to have played a key role in organizing the mass demonstrations that helped oust President Joseph Estrada in January.

Since cheap communication is the goal, many overseas Filipinos buy services that can only send text overseas but not receive it, or vice versa. Sometimes customers don't have a choice.

Jingle Ocampo, another Filipino maid in Hong Kong, receives frequent messages from a cousin living near Vancouver, British Columbia. Ocampo's phone carrier won't let her text back to Canada so she sends replies to friends in the Philippines, who then relay them to the cousin.

"It's like a triangle," said Susan Morallo, who was picnicking in the park with Ocampo and Salvador.

The texters often use Filipino, but some prefer a shortened form of English where "are" becomes "r" and "you" is "u."

No special telephone keyboard is needed; users simply punch a combination of keys on a handset's dial pad. Symbols such as asterisks can be combined to form graphics and cartoons.

Morallo showed a reporter one image wishing her "sweet dreams" then giggled mischievously while deciding it would be okay to show off another.

"This one is a bit naughty," she said.

It was.

"You can find a lover or partner, sometimes you can have a boyfriend by text," Morallo said.

Poignant text

A lover's last romantic text can be as poignant as a last love letter.

Philippine Army 2nd Lt. Gene Kenneth Bulong sent several messages to girlfriend Cathy Albrecht just before he was killed by a rocket-propelled grenade on June 2 while pursuing Abu Sayyaf guerillas in Lamitan, Basilan.

Albrecht said she would store the texts forever.

One says: "Take care Babes! Always remember that I love you! No matter how far I am now you are always here in my heart!" *AP*

Limitless blood in the pipeline

(From page A1)

stem cells into blood cells, possibly paving the way for creating inexhaustible blood banks, according to a report to be published Tuesday.

The breakthrough comes less than a month after US President George W. Bush laid down a new policy on stem cell research, allowing federal funding of work performed on existing stem cell lines.

Stem cells are master cells found in embryonic tissue that can grow to become any of the 220 types of cells and tissues that make up the human body.

Researchers believe work with these cells can help them find a way to cure deadly or degenerative diseases such as cancer, Alzheimer's or Parkinson's, or to repair spinal cord injuries.

The study conducted at the University of Wisconsin in Madison showed that stem cells could be directed to become what scientists call hematopoietic precursor cells, or hematopoietic colony-forming cells.

These cells display distinct biochemical markers and gene products characteristic of blood and bone marrow cells in the human body, the Wisconsin scientists pointed out.

In the course of their research, the scientists were able to make the precursor cells go on to form colonies of white blood cells, red blood cells and platelets, cells identical to those that arise from human bone marrow.

"This is the first evidence of anybody that has done what we all hope can be done—to take stem cells and grow red cells and white cells and platelets for transfusion," said William Miller, a professor at the Medical College of Wisconsin.

"If you can get them to go this far, it ought to be possible, with refined techniques, to get large vats of cells," he added.

The results of the study will be published Tuesday in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

More lab work

The researchers cautioned, however, that much more laboratory work would have to be done before medical facilities could begin producing blood for their needs using embryonic stem cells.

"This is not something that's going to be available tomorrow or next year," warned Dan Kaufman, a hematology fellow at the University of Wisconsin Medical School and the lead author of the study.

But university officials pointed out that the breakthrough gives the scientific community a road map for future mass production of human blood.

"They went through all the stages," said Terry Devitt, a spokesperson of the University of Wisconsin. "They have been able to come up with a blood product that we are familiar with in modern clinical settings."

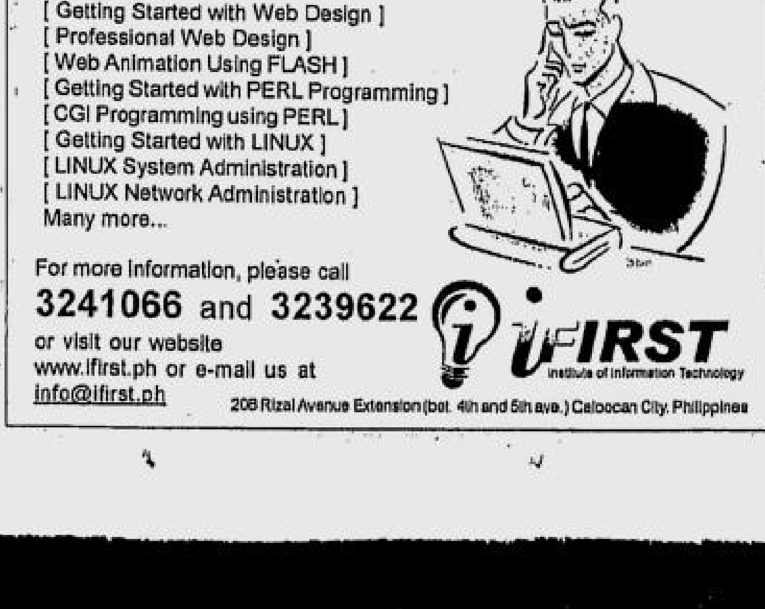
The breakthrough is expected to solve the perennial problem of blood shortage in US hospitals.

Late last year, for example, some hospitals were forced to cancel elective surgery because the Red Cross was able to provide only 36,000 blood units a day while demand reached 80,000 units, according to Red Cross officials.

The findings of the Wisconsin scientists could also help the medical community resolve the issue of blood compatibility.

According to Kaufman, only about 25 percent of leukemia and cancer patients who need blood or bone marrow transplants from another person get those transplants in the United States because it is difficult to get matching donor cells.

"A goal would be to treat those remaining 75 percent," the scientist said. *AFP*



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ANTI-LAUNDERING LAW

RP not likely to meet deadline

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo created a three-man panel to ensure that an anti-money laundering law is passed before the Sept. 30 deadline imposed by an international financial watch group.

But the man he named to head the panel, Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho, said the country is not likely to beat the deadline. He said he has written the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force and acknowledged that the anti-money laundering bill will not likely be passed by Sept. 30.

Camacho heads the panel, which includes Justice Undersecretary Jose Calida and Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas legal counsel Jose de Zuñiga.

On Monday, presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said Ms Macapagal "is confident we would have a money laundering law by the end of the month," the deadline set by the FATF, an anti-money laundering initiative of industrialized nations.

The FATF had placed the Philippines on its list of countries deemed "uncooperative" in the global war against money laundering.

The group warned that continued inclusion in the list could trigger a backlash from member countries, including advisories to prospective investors that the Philippines was a money-laundering haven.

Ultra-strict bank secrecy laws have made the Philippines an attractive money-laundering haven, Filipino officials have acknowledged.

Several senior ruling party senators have said the bill was unlikely to be passed within the month.

Tiglao said the President "applauds" the efforts of Congress in the past several weeks to consolidate about 11 bills filed by various senators and congressmen into a single bill that would hopefully be enacted into law by the end of the month.

"She is pleased there is a multiparty consensus to enact an anti-money laundering law in the next few weeks," Tiglao said.

Despite his pessimism, Camacho noted that despite the country's likely failure to meet the deadline, Congress was trying to fasttrack a legislation against money laundering.

He said he and Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura signed a joint letter to FATF president Clairie Low.

Both Camacho and Buenaventura were scheduled to meet next week in Japan with the chair of the FATF review group Noriaki Mizuno who is also the chair of FATF in the Asia Pacific.

Camacho denied allegations that Malacañang was not prepared to handle the money laundering issue as Sen. Joker Arroyo had claimed, prompting the Senate to call off the hearing yesterday. ***Martin P. Marfil and Clarissa Batino with an AFP report***

Postponement not funny–Joker

By Christine Avendaño

SEN. Joker Arroyo was irked yesterday after finding out that a Senate hearing on an anti-money laundering bill had been canceled without his prior knowledge, prompting him to question whether the executive branch was serious about rushing the passage of the measure after all.

"I came rushing to attend the Senate committee hearing," Arroyo told reporters, of the Senate hearings being conducted by the Senate committees on banks, financial institutions and currencies as well as justice and human rights.

Arroyo said he was informed of the cancellation when he was on his way to the committee hearing scheduled at 10 a.m. yesterday.

The Senate committees had reset the next hearing on Friday.

It turned out that the cancellation of the committee hearing yesterday was due to the unavailability of the resource persons, mostly officials from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

Arroyo said it was the executive branch that was rushing the passage of an anti-money laundering bill aware of a Sept.30 deadline given by the Financial Action Task Force, an international anti-money laundering watchdog.

"We can't be more popish than the Pope," he added.

Ex-gov escapes, but wife is held for extradition

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE WIFE of the former governor of Quezon province, Eduardo Rodriguez, has been arrested in connection with an extradition case filed by the United States against the couple for insurance fraud.

Agents of the Interpol Division of the National Bureau of Investigation arrested Imelda Rodriguez last Tuesday inside Room 508 of the Prince Plaza II condominium on De la Rosa Street in Makati City.

However, Eduardo Rodriguez, who was supposed to have been with his wife, eluded arrest.

Lawyer Ricardo Diaz, the leader of the arresting team, said Imelda was first brought to the Makati Medical Center after she complained of chest pains. She was subsequently taken to the NBI Interpol office in Manila.

The US requested for the extradition of the Rodriguezes based on a criminal suit filed by a US insurance company against Eduardo, who ran but lost in the Quezon gubernatorial race during the May elections.

According to records obtained by the NBI Interpol, the ex-governor had declared his wife, Imelda, and her mother dead and produced a fake death certificate to claim insurance benefits in 1985.

When the company discovered that Imelda and her mother were still alive, they included Imelda in the criminal suit.

A US court has recommended a bail bond of $2 million each for the couple.

The officials of the US insurance company said that Eduardo collected $25,000 from them based on his fraudulent claim.

The alleged fraud occurred in 1985 but the US request for extradition was submitted to the justice department only in February 1999.

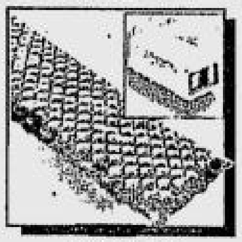
It was not clear how Eduardo succeeded in collecting the insurance money considering the strict procedures followed by US insurance companies before releasing claims to beneficiaries.

Eduardo has denied that he and his wife were fugitives from US justice.

He claimed that the Supreme Court had resolved that he was "not a fugitive from justice" in a 1996 ruling, which upheld his gubernatorial victory in 1995 over Bienvenido Marquez Jr.

Interpol agents said the arrest was based on a provisional warrant issued by a Manila trial court on April 26 this year.

BEDRIDDEN WITH BEDSORES?



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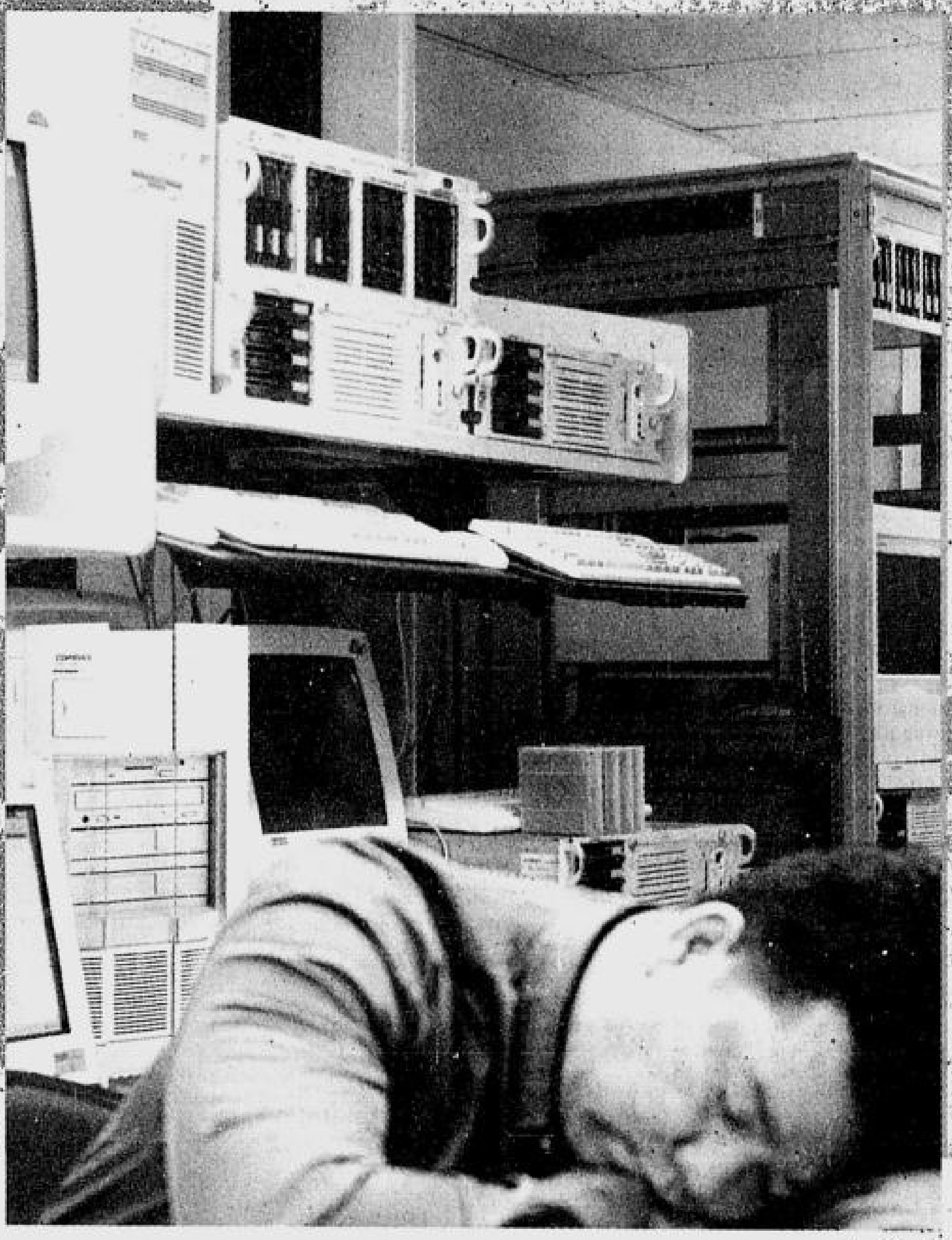

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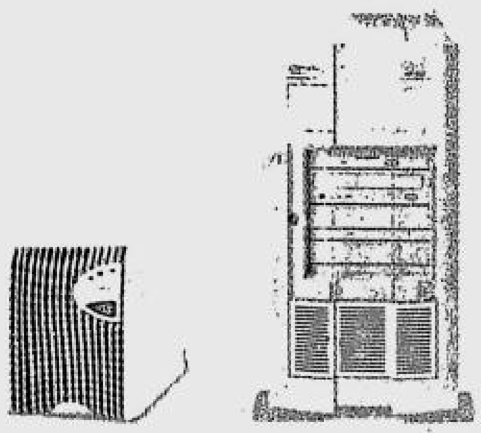

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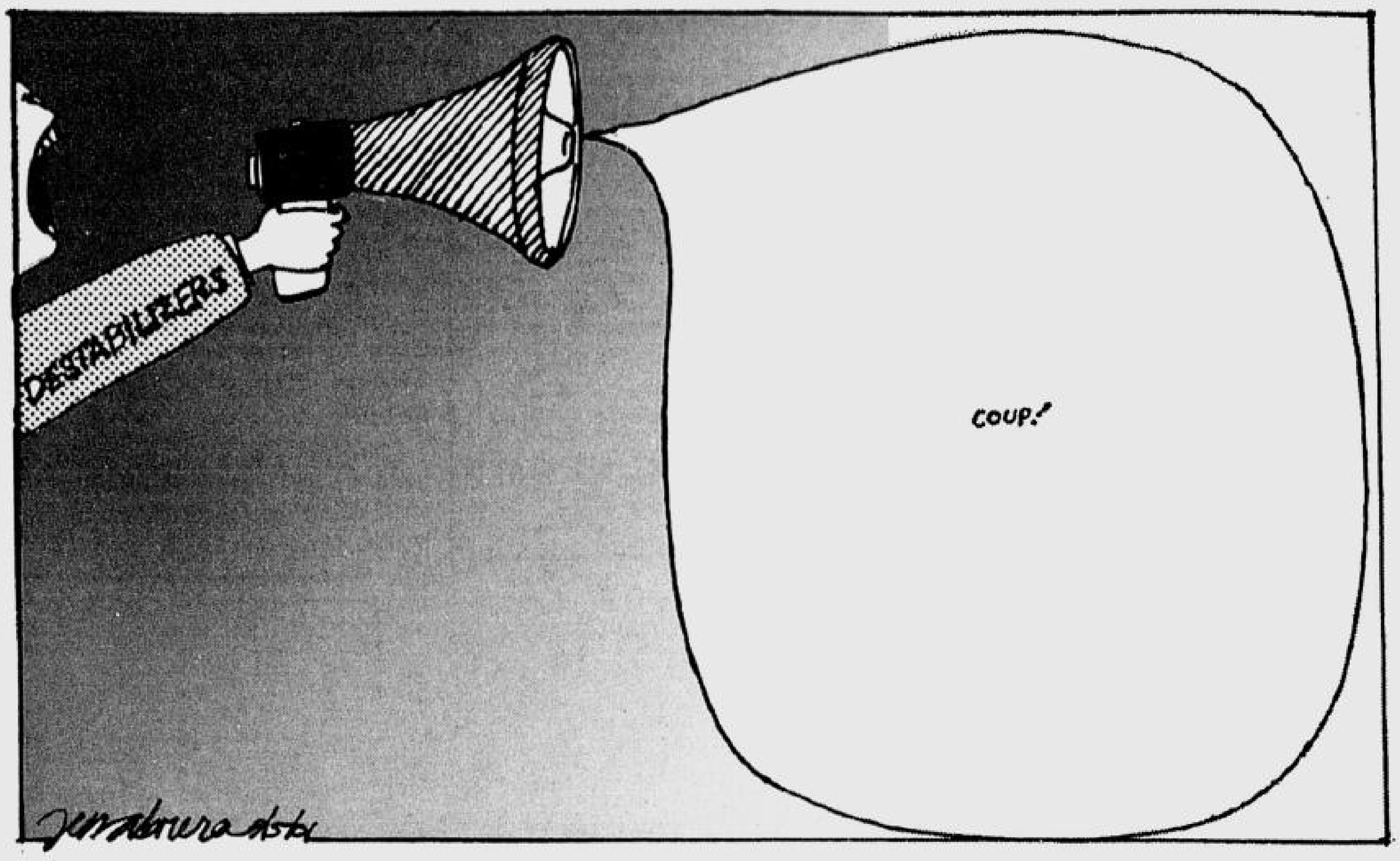


EDITORIALS

All right, sir?

FOR graduates of the Philippine Military Academy, Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes' appearance at last Thursday's "question hour" at the Senate is without doubt the one they will remember the most.

On that day, Sen. Panfilo Lacson (PMA Class of 1971) challenged the basic veracity of the testimony of Secretary Reyes (Class of 1966) by asking him, "All right, sir?" Instead of answering with the standard reply, a forthright "All right, sir!" the defense chief said, "I am under oath, your honor."

The challenge might have gone unremarked by the media and then by the general public, if the debate that erupted in PMA circles right after that exchange had not reached the ears of some reporters.

In the PMA tradition, the question "All right, sir?" is code for "Are you telling the truth?" Or, to be more precise: "Are you being honorable?" The phrase challenges the cadet under question whether he is living up to the training institution's famous honor code. Like all instances of special language, however, context in the use of the code is all-important. In the PMA, only upperclassmen are supposed to invoke the challenge with junior cadets.

"A lower classman can never, ever ask an upperclassman if it's all right," one PMA graduate told the INQUIRER. There is one exception: "When you're on guard duty as officer-of-the-day or cadet-in-charge-of-quarters, you can challenge an upperclassman." Clearly, this is the exception that proves the rule. The question is a senior's privilege.

Lacson's use of the phrase thus rankled some PMA alumni because, in the words of one PMA alumnus serving in Manila, it "was an outright insult" to Reyes. "When you commit that offense you must be very brave." In PMA parlance, "being very brave" means losing respect for an upperclassman.

It is possible that Lacson's challenge was inadvertent. Under severe pressure, the former national police chief may have simply committed a gaffe. He had already breached a minor matter of parliamentary protocol last week, referring to himself as a "distinguished member" of the Senate when tradition calls for the use of the phrase "humble representation." At any rate, protocol—whether legislative or military—is not the issue here.

Rather, it is the hierarchy of values. Which, as a matter of public concern, is more important to the nation? The honor code of the PMA, or the rule of law as symbolized in the oath that Reyes took? Whether wittingly or not, Lacson tried to frame the scandal that has engulfed him within the context of the PMA code. Reyes' answer, whether simply a masterful evasion or a matter of conviction, pointed to a higher standard of honor and truth.

There is no gainsaying the esteem in which the public now holds the military, particularly because of Edsa I and II. But we are constrained to point out the following. As the country's history under martial law demonstrates, the problem with "All right, sir?" as a challenge to honor is not that it is asked at all, but that it is not asked often enough.

All right, ma'am

FAMOUSLY, graduates of the PMA are supposed to be officers and gentlemen. This lesson must have been lost on Chief Supt. John Campos, or he may have simply been "absent," to use the language of the streets, when the PMA Class of 1987 took it up. But his vehement, boorish and transparently false denials in the past week about his illicit relationship with former narcotics agent Mary "Rosebud" Ong have not only left the public reeling in disgust; they have also left his denials about his alleged involvement in organized crime flapping in the wind.

He has modified his denials over time, as contrary evidence reached the media. After categorically saying he has never had a relationship with Rosebud, he later said he had merely "used" her—in his dogged pursuit, we must suppose, of official police objectives.

This statement is unfortunate. It not only confirms the stereotype of the Neanderthal lover; it also reminds us that, for many people and just PMA alumni, the concept of honor remains stuck in the Stone Age. For them, might makes right, and public service and private friendship be damned.

Why are we poisoning our own people?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

DURING the administration of President Marcos, the Calaca coal-powered power plant in Batangas was thought to be a godsend. This was during the Oil Shock when the international oil cartel, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec), sent the prices of crude oil soaring. We had plenty of coal deposits so coal-powered power plants meant big savings in foreign exchange otherwise needed to pay for the expensive crude oil. Indeed, together with hydroelectric and geothermal power plants, coal-powered plants reduced our dependence on crude oil. The Bataan nuclear power plant would have made us even less dependent on oil but it was overtaken by the 1986 People Power Revolution that unseated Marcos and President Corazon Aquino mothballed the nuclear plant simply because it was started by Marcos.

But then as now, coal is the dirtiest fuel to power factories and electric plants. It polluted whole cities and countrysides during the Industrial Revolution. So that when huge quantities of oil was discovered, coal lost its appeal as a fuel source. Until the Oil Shock.

Now the Calaca Power Plant and other coal plants in the Philippines are no longer godsends. It is now a monster spewing toxins poisoning people, animals and plants. For the last 17 years, it has been doing that. It causes acid rain; it causes respiratory diseases; it has made the fields barren; and it has poisoned the waters and the fish. It emits "dioxins," a known carcinogen, and probably the most toxic compound known to science. Now it has been confirmed by the environmental group Greenpeace that the waste stream from the coal plant is loaded with mercury, another very potent toxin. It has been found that the ash pond of the Calaca plant contained 0.21 parts per million (ppm) of mercury, a very lethal concentration.

The trouble with mercury is that it does not degrade with time. It accumulates in the body without any symptoms until too late. It accumulates in the bodies of fish and shellfish that eat it and in the bodies of humans who eat them. The result is paralysis, a wasting away of the human body, and a painful death.

The most celebrated case of mercury poisoning was in Minamata, a small fishing community in Japan, in the 1950s. It was first noticed when cats were observed convulsing and twisting about in pain. Soon, humans were suffering the same symptoms. They became paralyzed, their limbs atrophied; death was a welcome relief. More than a hundred people died in the end.

The culprits were the factories spewing mercury in the sea. The fish and shellfish ingested them; the cats and human then ate the contaminated seafood and were stricken.

The same tragedy can happen in Calaca and surrounding communities, Greenpeace and the Manila Meteor newspaper warned. So now that we know Batangueños are slowly being poisoned, what are we going to do, especially Justice Secretary Hernani Perez? If he doesn't do something soon, he may not have enough fellow Batangueños to vote for him when he runs for election.

Perez can ask President Macapagal or his fellow Cabinet member, Energy Secretary Vincent Perez to order the National Power Corp. to close not only the Calaca plant but other coal-powered plants elsewhere. There are also coal power plants in Mauban, Quezon; Pagbilao, Quezon; Sual, Pangasinan; and Zambales. We won't suffer from any loss of electricity even if the operation of these power plants are suspended.

At present, we have an oversupply of generated electricity. Aside from the Napocor's own power plants, the Independent Power Producers (IPPs) are generating an excess of electricity.

The Napocor pays the IPPs for the electricity they produce even if this is not used, in fact, even if they do not operate at all. That guarantee is in the contracts signed between the government and the IPPs during the administration of President Ramos. That is why the Napocor has been losing a lot of money. It is paying for electricity unsold, unused and even ungenerated.

So the Napocor can close the coal plants and let the IPPs take over supplying the electricity to be lost with the closure of the coal plants. The Napocor is paying them anyway, they might as well earn it.

Don't wait for the first patient to be stricken with the Minamata disease. The government has to do something immediately. Not doing anything will be a crime against humanity. Ms Macapagal, the two Perezes and the Napocor will never be forgiven by the people.

* * *

The Philippine National Railroad is being wasted as a means of transportation. While the government and the private sector are investing a lot of money on expensive, new elevated railroads, the Light Rail Transits and Metrorails, it is neglecting the railroad that is already there, the PNR. Yet the PNR can be very useful in helping ease the traffic congestion in the streets of Metro Manila and environs. It can provide squatters relocated to communities outside Metro Manila with cheap—or even free—transportation to and from the metropolis. In fact, the government should revive the Pasig River and Manila-Cavite ferries to relieve the pressure on land transportation. If necessary, it should even subsidize them, the same way it is subsidizing the Metrorail and LRT.

The new PNR general manager, Jose Sarasola, is ready to return the railroad to its old form. The trouble is that the tracks are hemmed in by squatters. They live so close to the tracks that some drunk or careless squatter is often crushed to death by passing trains. Worse, squatters sometimes throw garbage and excrement on the passing trains. Sarasola is now bent on relocating the squatters for their own good.

But the squatters will surely resist leaving their shanties, and some politicians, courting votes, will surely come to their succor. What these politicians, and the squatters themselves, don't realize is that allowing them to stay beside the railroad tracks puts them in danger every day and every hour. They don't realize that being relocated to a community outside Metro Manila with the PNR rehabilitated to its former glory, would be like living in paradise. They would have plenty of space, fresh air and sunshine, green grass and trees, and still be able to commute cheaply and quickly to the city via the PNR.

In fact, many middle class families would like to move to the countryside if there was fast transportation like the railroad to commute to the city. In Japan people working in Tokyo go home every day to communities as far as Tarlac here via the bullet train. If we have such a train here, many people would opt to leave Metro Manila and live in the wide open spaces of the provinces.

Come to think of it, why not have a Japanese firm rehabilitate the PNR on a rehabilitate-operate-transfer arrangement. The Japanese are among the experts in the railroad industry. They have been helping us in many infrastructure and other projects. Why not the railroad?

Thank God for Mary Ong

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

FRANKLY, I do not know why Victor Corpus didn't present Mary Ong from the start. If he had, he would have spared us—and himself—an eternity of trouble. He would have spared us—and himself—the indignity of having one of his witnesses detained in the Senate for contempt. He would have spared us—and himself—the infamy of being thought of as a well-intentioned but incompetent buffoon.

Mary Ong is not just by far the most credible witness Corpus has trotted out, she is by far the **only** credible witness Corpus has trotted out.

Carmelo Caluag, S.J. Ador Mawanay's protector, says the fact that Ong has stolen the thunder from everybody doesn't mean government has lost interest in Mawanay. He will be back, he swears. I can only hope for the sake of the government's case that he doesn't. Maybe Mawanay is telling the truth, maybe not. But that is something we will never know for sure. The word of someone who rips off college kids in cell phone deals is not exactly one that inspires confidence. It can only inspire blind faith, which in the end can only impair government's position. Certainly, it will impair Ong's testimony, whose purity stands to be diluted with half-truths.

The women's groups are right. Ong is by far the only disinterested witness government has proffered so far. She has nothing to gain by testifying against Lacson; on the contrary, she has everything to lose. It took exceptional courage for the mother of two, who will have to spend the rest of her life looking behind her back, quite apart from trying to make both ends meet—I do hope they turn her story into a movie and give her the nest egg she deserves—to do what she has done.

Of course the people she is accusing of some of the most sordid crimes the human imagination has hatched are painting her into a Medea, and saying hell hath no fury LIKE a woman scorned. Ah, but John Campos flatters himself into being a Jason. In any case, his, and his colleague's, reflexive machismo does not detract one bit from Ong's testimony, it lends more luster to it. Their male self-absorption is well in keeping with drug-pushing, kidnapping, torture, murder and the other crimes Ong is accusing them of. It is all of a piece, the machismo and the cruelty, the wife-beating and the life-taking.

I listened closely to Ong's testimony last Monday, and it rang true for six hours. Like Mawanay's and Devnani's testimony, her testimony was largely an eyewitness one. She had no documents (other than her own notes and diary) or recordings to show proof of what she saw and heard. But unlike Mawanay's and Devnani's testimony, she was very precise in what she saw and heard. She had names, she had dates, she had places. Her work, which was as undercover agent for the anti-narcotics group, in the course of which she met, fell in love and lived with Campos—a story worthy of John Le Carré with its themes of love and betrayal and the invisible lines between heroes and villains—put her in an excellent position to see and hear. And unlike Mawanay and Devnani, Ong had nothing to hide, only everything to fear.

Lacson would say later that he was ready to confront Ong with inconsistencies in her story. But I do not see how those inconsistencies, where they exist, can impair the truth, or accuracy, of her testimony as a whole. I myself found Ong's lapses positively endearing, or a telltale sign of being truthful rather than guileful. That was the case for example where, upon questioning by Noli de Castro, Ong identified Batangas as one of the theater of operations of the Campos' and Reynaldo Acop's group, thinking Sariaya was part of Batangas rather than Quezon. She wasn't very good at geography, she giggled sheepishly, when apprised of her mistake. It was spontaneity like this that showed that though she was obviously coached by her lawyers into making a coherent presentation of her story, she was telling her story as she knew it, nothing more, nothing less.

Her whole body language, the one thing that speaks louder than words, said she knew whereof she spoke. She was completely at ease, answering questions plainly and without hesitation. She did not speculate. Where she did not know, as when questioned about the ownership of certain houses, she said so. I applauded when she gave information about drugs being planted in the house of a Chinese national who was in Xiamen at the time his house was raided (along with five others). While at this, Rene Cayetano deserves to be commended as well for bringing to the Senate's attention the fact that Ong's testimony about evidence being planted against a fellow who now languishes in one of our jails should be a basis for reopening his case.

Of course there may not be enough in Ong's testimony to pin down Lacson to murder and mayhem, but there is enough there at least to hale John Campos and Reynaldo Acop to court. Indeed, there is enough there to widen the scope of investigation into the extent to which the country's law enforcers have become the country's foremost law violators. Let's take it from there. Let the ax fall where it may.

All in all, Ong's appearance at the Senate has been a most satisfying one. It's enough to make you believe a providential hand guides the destiny of this country. Early this year, it was women too who brought down one of the most corrupt and macho presidents this country has known. In the end, it wasn't Chavit Singson who did that, it was Emma Lim, Clarissa Ocampo, et al. who lent credibility to his testimony. Now it is a woman who is threatening to bring down one of the most corrupt and macho institutions this country has ever known. It is not Mawanay or Devnani or even Corpus who will do that, it is Ong. It's enough to make you think someone up there is writing the script for all this, one that resonates with sublime irony and poetic justice.

But whatever the case, thank God for it. Thank God for Mary Ong.

The damage in the Senate continues

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE CALL for a constitutional revision appears premature, but when to begin the task is a matter of timing—or to put it another way, a question of arranging priorities. I am avoiding on purpose using the term "prioritizing" or "prioritization"—which is a dreadful adaptation of Filipino pidgin English revealing our proclivity for reinventing language to suit parochial idiom.

The legislature is fully engaged in immediate concerns, such as investigations into the allegations implicating an honorable member of the Senate in sordid offenses and the alleged military cop-out in Basilan during the break-out of the Abu Sayyaf in Lamitan, let alone tackling the national budget and the agenda for economic recovery.

The process of constitutional revision necessarily begins in the legislature, and yet dumping too much work on it raises questions of whether it is capable of doing detective work while addressing the more cerebral task of renovating the basic law. The legislature is all over the place and yet it is clear that it needs urgent repairs as a damaged institution, devastated by its record of subservience to the executive during the Estrada administration.

Moreover, the fact that the Senate has been infiltrated by assorted characters whose expertise lies in such occupations as policeman, actor, basketball player, media broadcaster and somewhat illiterate people casts doubt on its ability to repair its prestige as a contemplative institution bathed in wisdom, as in yesteryears.

In the aftermath of the wave of populism, in which popularity became the primary currency for winning high public office based on cash flows, the Senate is clearly a pathetic casualty of this phenomenon.

The fact alone that the Senate is so heavily damaged—looking like the ruins of bombed out cities of World War II—attests to the need for reviewing whether the Senate is at all necessary for a functioning political system or is it an irrelevant and anachronistic institution whose time has arrived to be put to pasture.

The crisis of Edsa II, which was triggered by the Senate vote that demolished the impeachment trial of deposed President Estrada and destroyed the people's faith in some of their institutions, kicked up to the surface the issue of whether we have to adopt a parliamentary system within the framework of federalism, to mention only a few issues highlighted by the crisis.

The crisis of the Estrada presidency underlines the rigidity of the fixed-term presidential system. When tested in the crucible of the Estrada crisis, the system was found inflexible and unyielding to popular demand for change, forcing the people to take another recourse—the parliament of the streets—to remove Estrada. In its aftermath, a new ogre has emerged—the propensity to resort to people power to redress grievances, fundamental or trivial.

If the confrontational and adversarial concept fostered by the American presidential system was criticized for its potential for creating impasse or gridlock, this downside crystallized in the conflict of the Estrada years. Clearly, flexibility and elasticity to cope with crisis and change are not the virtues to recommend the presidential system.

Apparently, the Senate has not recovered from the shock it suffered after its majority vote aborted the impeachment process. In its present composition and its present activities, the Senate does not seem to know what to do with itself or with one of its members who is at the center of investigation into his alleged links with drug trafficking, money laundering and kidnapping for ransom by criminal gangs.

As evidence in the Senate investigation piles up against Sen. Panfilo Lacson, the Senate has come under growing public pressure for the expulsion of Lacson. Retired generals, who initiated the move for the resignation of Estrada, are again on the warpath, calling for Lacson's resignation. These generals are Lacson's brother-in-arms, alumni of the Philippine Military Academy, and they see the danger to Philippine democracy in the lodgment of Lacson in one of its key political institutions and the dilemma of the Senate over Lacson. If the Senate has to survive as a credible democratic institution, it has to come out with a credible solution to the Lacson dilemma.

The Senate investigation is no longer confined to the halls of the Senate. It has spilled over to the arena of public opinion where the Senate has lost much esteem since the impeachment trial and over its confused behavior in the investigation of Lacson. The arena of public opinion has a different dynamic from internal legislative politics or even the judicial process.

There is also one curious aspect in the direction of the Senate inquiry. The Senate's question hour has put Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes in the hot seat and the focus on Reyes and the military establishment has created perceptions that the Senate is paranoid over coup plots. One may ask whether it is the military establishment that is on trial, rather than Lacson on whom the inquiry should properly be focused. The inquiry is turning into not only an inquisition into the Armed Forces but an institutional gang-up by Congress on the military establishment. One wonders whether some senators have launched a demolition job on the Armed Forces.

I don't believe there is a compelling reason to create a conflict between the legislature and the military over the Lacson investigation, but the Senate is, I am afraid, diverting the inquiry toward a conflict situation. In the effort to repair the damage it has inflicted on itself, not only during the impeachment trial but also through the wrong focus of its current inquiry, the Senate is trying to bring down the Armed Forces, when its job is to see to it that it does not degrade itself into being a haven for ill-timed filibustering, or a sanctuary to whitewash a member under investigation for serious allegations involving the security of the State.

A basic right

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

"*ANG walang kamatayang problema ng mga* birth certificate (The undying problems about birth certificates)" is how radio public service announcers describe the never-ending stream of complaints and inquiries about securing birth certificates or problems with these documents.

It seems that birth certificates rank up there along with veterans' benefits, SSS and GSIS pensions and loans, traffic violations and what a TV station has dubbed "LTB" (*lubak*, *tubig* at *baha* or potholes, water and floods) as the most common aggravations of citizens.

One has to wonder, though, why, despite all the grief they get on birth certificates, the National Statistics Office has just launched a national campaign to get more parents to register their children. Together with Plan International, an NGO devoted to children's concerns, the NSO has launched the Unregistered Children's Project. It aims to secure birth certificates for an estimated two million children from 0-7 years old who have not been registered, as well as for older children and even adults.

Why the need for the project? NSO Administrator Carmelita "Bobby" Ericta says a birth certificate establishes a child's identity, citizenship and basic rights. "Without a birth certificate, a child is a non-entity," said Ericta when she guested last Saturday on "XYZone," which I host over "Angel Radyo" dzAR 1026. "And every child has a right to a name and an identity."

These days, a birth certificate is a pre-requisite for practically every state service, from enrolment in public (and private) school, to getting a driver's license, a wedding license and a passport.

* * *

ONE would think, in these civilized times, that registering the birth of a child would be routine and normal. And yet, among the sites targeted for the Unregistered Children's Project are two cities in Metro Manila—Quezon City and Pasay. In Quezon City alone, said Ericta, there are thousands of street children whose parents have yet to register them.

There are many reasons children are not registered at birth, said Ericta. One is simply negligence on the part of the birth attendant, even though they are required to register every child whose birth they assist in. Parents need not even wait for the doctor, nurse, midwife or *hilot* to register their child. They can do it themselves, and, stresses Ericta, there is no charge for registering a recent birth.

For "late registration," however, local governments charge a wide range of fees, often depending on how old the child is. To this end, part of the project is lobbying with national and local governments to socialize if not do away entirely with fees for late registration so that poor parents register their children.

There are many other reasons children remain unregistered, including cultural barriers since in some communities formal registration is not encouraged. But by far the most common reason for not registering a child, says Ericta, is the status of the parents.

"In many cases, the couple may not be married and since the law requires that in this case the child should take the mother's surname, couples prefer to wait until they can get married before registering their children," she notes. In cases when marriage is not possible—if the man or woman is married to another, for example—they may simply be too embarrassed to have this situation put down in black and white in a public document.

This was borne out when, toward the show's close, we got a call from a man caught in precisely such a situation, his voice hardly rising above a whisper. Since he couldn't marry the mother of his child, Ericta told him, he had no choice but to register the child under the mother's name, though he could acknowledge paternity if he wanted.

* * *

FOR many people complaining about birth certificates, though, it isn't the practical, cultural or even emotional barriers to registration that bothers them. They or members of their family are already registered, but securing a "certified true copy" of the birth certificate is fraught with aggravation and complications.

Where before one had to join a daily mob gathering before the NSO offices on Ramon Magsaysay Boulevard, one can now apply for a copy of a birth certificate through phone or through the Internet. After paying a fee with a bank, the document (which can also be a death certificate or a wedding license) is then sent via courier service.

A friend had availed himself of this service recently, but had quite a mouthful to tell about his experience. Seeking to get a copy of his son's birth certificate which was a requirement for graduation, he was quite pleased when their Internet application and the payment process went off without a hitch. Then they waited—and waited—and waited—for the document to arrive. After a few weeks, they called the courier company and was shunted from one district office to the next. Finally, a full month after they paid for the service, they received an envelope that contained not a birth certificate but a note saying the search had yielded a "negative" result. Fuming, my friend finally decided to go to the Quezon City Hall to personally apply for the document and got it about four hours later.

* * *

"FOR every complaint we get *naman*, thousands are satisfied with our service," Ericta protests gently when I tell her of this complaint and many others I've received since writing about birth certificates.

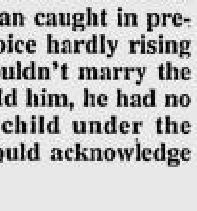
"All we can guarantee with this service is that our staff will go through our files and search for your documents, but there is no guarantee that they will find what you want." Again, there are hundreds of reasons birth certificates and other public documents get lost or mis-filed: names are spelled wrong, data such as time of birth, place of birth, or witnesses are incomplete or erroneous, or the originals got lost, burnt or flooded.

As I said at the start, the problems with birth certificates are *walang kamatayan* indeed.

Unintended jokes in our many dialects

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo



THERE has been encouraging e-mail response from Kapampangans who noticed a glaring error in last Friday's column. I mistranslated *langgam* as *ayup* when ant should be *panas*. For those who missed that column I wrote about my Kapampangan father trying to put down the language of my Tagalog mother. To illustrate the complexity and superiority of Kapampangan over Tagalog he said that an unhatched egg which was *itlog* on the road from Manila to Bulacan became an *ebun* when it crossed the river into Apalit. To complete his theory that Kapampangan was "more advanced" than Tagalog he would make another example of the very same bird or *ibon* in Tagalog that became *ayup* in Kapampangan. My mistake resulted in gentle reminders and constructive criticism from readers—mostly Kapampangan—that are so different from the irate responses I often get when I trip. Raised in a multi-lingual household I got confused because I remember my mother ordering the gardener to get rid of ants (*langgam* in Tagalog) and our Visayan gardener chased the birds away.

My adventures in mistranslation have caused many embarrassing situations that have become simply amusing in retrospect. In my youth I was nearly thrown out of a bakery in Spain when I asked for the price of *mamon* in the display case. I learned later that these were called *magdalenas* and that *mamon* was the vulgar term for breasts. A friend in Madrid wanted to buy canned goods at a grocery and asked for *preservativas*. She was surprised to be given a choice of condoms because the correct term for canned goods was *conservas*. Then of course, everyone knows why the famous "Pitoy" Moreno uses his Christian name and is billed as "Jose Moreno" in Spain. Pitoy translates into penis and moreno means dark.

We not only have problems with Spanish, but with English as well. A Filipino in London once complained about the Royal Mail because his letters never reached home. It was discovered that he did not use the red "post box," he put his letters in the green "litter box" that one found all over the city. That's not as bad as stories I hear from friends in Philippine Airlines who recounted, complete with actions, how a hysterical stewardess, during an emergency, ordered the passengers to "ejaculate" when she meant evacuate. Then there was the steward who tried to locate the proud owner of a pair of glasses that were lost and found. He got on the loudspeaker and announced that he had found a pair of "testicles" when he actually meant "spectacles." Mistranslation or Freudian slip I leave the choice to the reader. Other than that you can complain to the INQUIRER readers' advocate.

Our national language, Pilipino, is often the cause of much amusement when Filipinos cross linguistic and cultural barriers every day, sometimes ending up with something they did not bargain for. Non-Kapampangans like to joke about the phrase *potang bengi* (tonight) which translates into a deaf prostitute—*pota na bengi pa!* The Kapampangan word for bridge (*tete*) translates into penis in Tagalog. What about the Pampanga town of Sismoan which used to be known as Sexmoan? Speaking of place-names there is no truth to the rumor that Andres Bonifacio fathered a child in Libog, Albay. That same "l" word in Ilonggo means confused rather than lusty in Pilipino.

Other examples abound: once, while I was walking around the Dagupan market I was surprised to overhear someone ask a vendor *antutan*? What sounded like the Pilipino word for intercourse actually meant "what is that?" The possibilities are enough to fill a website, but my all time favorite in double meaning is not in Kapampangan but the Ilocano phrase *nagbayag nga agpapukis* which means taking a long time for a haircut. In Pilipino, this innocent Ilocano phrase takes on another meaning because the words for taking a long time and haircut turn into vulgar anatomical terms.

Our jokes, our texts, our speech are funny because we think in many languages flitting from English to Pilipino to Spanish to other Philippine languages creating culture-based puns only Pinoys find hilarious. Remember those jeepney signs that read, "God knows Hudas not pay." What about mudguards on trucks that read "Safe side" and "Suicide." In terms of surnames, will you give your hard-earned savings to an investment banker named "Lugue" or go to court with "Attorney Pakulong?" In history, how will one forget the man who assassinated Diego Silang. His name was Pedro Becbec. The late Kapampangan essayist Renato D. Tayag is the only person I know who proudly gave out misprinted calling cards. He was appointed to the board of directors of the Philippine National Bank and he was given cards that spelled his name "R.D. Bayag" which isn't so surprising because there are people with that surname spelled "Biag" or "Bayag." How vulgar it becomes is all in the mind, in culture and the pronunciation.

The Philippines is a nation of over 7,000 islands with numerous ethno-linguistic groups, thus it is necessary to have one national language—other than English—but as the above examples have shown a national language can also confuse and delight.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

Farmers, NGOs ask Braganza to resign: Honeymoon is over

COMMENTARY

Nono Alfonso, S.J.,
Institute on Church and Social Issues

WHILE Sen. Panfilo Lacson is currently enjoying national attention or notoriety, another government official is also feeling the heat. Farmers groups and their ally non-government organizations are calling for the resignation of Secretary Hernani Braganza of the Department of Agrarian Reform. In recent weeks, rumors were going around that in one or two occasions, Secretary Braganza got a "dressing down" from the President. The story was that President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was unhappy with the low targets set by Braganza for his department. Another version was that Braganza came ill-prepared for a Cabinet meeting. According to these stories, furthermore, in the event of a Cabinet revamp, Secretary Braganza would be the first to go.

Although Malacañang has denied these rumors, farmers groups and their ally NGOs could only wish that Braganza was on his way out. After seven months in office, Braganza is yet to show them concrete achievements for the sector. In the past, shortly after the Secretary's 100-day honeymoon period, only the radical farmers groups called for Braganza's resignation. Significantly, these days, the moderate groups have also joined the fray. Reportedly, even the few farmers of Task Force Mapalad-Negros who were recently "installed" to their farms—albeit after considerable pressure was made on DAR by civil society groups—also want Secretary Braganza out of the agrarian reform office.

Dissatisfaction

The groundswell of dissatisfaction over Braganza, simply put, boils down to performance. The Secretary has failed miserably to deliver on the promises he made to the major clientele of his office—the farmers. Early in his term, farmers groups, their ally NGOs and DAR agreed on certain "doables." These included the cancellation of administrative orders by past regimes that were detrimental to agrarian reform, and the fast-tracking of land distribution. Specifically, among the anti-agrarian reform policies being contested by farmers is former Secretary Horacio Morales' DAR A.O. 2 (series of 1999) on joint venture corporations. Sponsored by Danding Cojuangco, this measure ties up farmers with a private corporation, which is usually owned by the former landowner, in an inequitable joint venture to the effect that the former landowners get to retain effective control over their landholdings. While Braganza had declared early on that he was against the measure, to this day however, the A.O has still to be revoked.

Braganza's performance in land distribution, which is supposed to be the primary mandate of his office, is equally unsatisfactory. First off, farmers groups decry the low targets he has set for land distribution. DAR's land distribution target has been set at 100,000 hectares of private lands per year. According to farmers groups however this goal is even lower than the 133,000 hectares of private lands distributed per year during Estrada's time. Against the backlog of 1.2 million hectares, DAR's low targets would not be enough to enable it to complete the program by 2008 which is the deadline set by the law.

Secondly, there are certain areas where DAR's backlog in terms of land distribution efforts is still very huge. In the island of Negros alone which is home to the traditional "haciendas," DAR has yet to make a significant inroad. Government estimates place the balance at 50 percent while in other places the balance is placed at 70 to 80 percent. Farmers groups have asked DAR to concentrate on and prioritize Negros and other such provinces. In this way, they suggest, DAR's efforts would be more systematic, efficient, as well as dramatic. To date however, DAR has not taken measures to show the prioritization of certain provinces in its land distribution efforts.

In the area of political will, Secretary Braganza also got a very low score when he failed last April to install legitimate farmer beneficiaries in Negros Occidental. According to Task Force Mapalad, the federation of farmers in Negros, the installation did not push through on time because Secretary Braganza gave in to landowner pressure. Only after the farmers picketed DAR's central office and the considerable publicity that these drew was the Secretary able to install some of the farmers. While for DAR, the case of the Mapalad farmers was simply a matter of being delayed, for farmers groups the case showed the mettle of Secretary Braganza. For them, it demonstrated a lack of political will, if not courage on the part of the Secretary—something which they say is required in one who holds this most problematic Cabinet portfolio.

Mandate

As some farmers are pointing out, the Secretary's sluggishness in the area of land distribution may be rooted in his differing view of the mandate of his office. In several consultations, he has harped on the importance of support services which include developing the capacities of farmer beneficiaries through the formation of agrarian reform communities. While farmers and their ally NGOs do not deny this, they say that the primary mandate of DAR is land distribution. It is after all the essence of agrarian reform. After land distribution, other government agencies such as the Department of Agriculture are there to help the farmers cultivate their lands. For DAR to focus its time and efforts on support services—which is an easier job than the contentious distribution of land—is a betrayal of its mandate.

This is not to say that the DAR Secretary has not done anything at all. For one, farmers groups and NGOs recognize his open door policy which creates an atmosphere of dialogue and communication between government and the farmers. Secretary Braganza likewise has created four task forces to help DAR discharge its duties; notable in these committees is his Task Force Katarungan which aims to beef up the legal capacity of the department. Yet all these efforts would not seem enough. On his open door policy, many groups have gotten tired of the dialogues, saying that after all the consultations and meetings, not much has been accomplished. As regards the task forces, these have yet to produce significant outputs. On the whole though, the farmers believe that the Secretary is filled with good intentions, especially perhaps because of his activist background. And yet, they say, his good intentions are not enough.

For Ms Macapagal, perhaps a lesson here can be learned. When Secretary Braganza was appointed to head DAR, the President pointed out as his main qualification his youth. Many however suggested that Ms Macapagal appointed him because of the former Spice Boy's role in the impeachment trial. By and large, the former representative has not ceased to be a politician. While this can be an asset in Congress or in the government's peace efforts in which Secretary Braganza is also involved, it is a minus in the Executive Branch of government. As many political thinkers point out, government is housekeeping. Never send then a politician to do a manager's job. Otherwise, according to the Peter Principle, you place him in a position where he will not be effective and efficient.

For his part, Secretary Braganza has oftentimes appealed for more time. He claims he has only warmed his seat. For the farmers' sector however, seven months is enough time. Indeed they say while bureaucrats can afford the luxury of time, for many of them, who are perhaps among the country's poorest of the poor, a delay in agrarian justice means no food on the table. While for DAR, agrarian reform is just a job to do, for farmers it is a matter on which their life or death depends.

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Be aware of counterfeit drugs

A READER whose letter was published last Aug. 30, 2001 suggested that "local drug firms should learn from India."

It is indeed remarkable how India was able to develop its pharmaceutical industry starting in the 1950s into one which is no longer dependent on imports. The drug companies now have the capability of producing their raw materials and they also have more than 23,000 manufacturing facilities. These are just some of the factors that contribute to the lower prices of Indian-manufactured medicines.

There are, however, more weighty factors that make Indian medicines cheap. Brand piracy and counterfeiting are rampant. A well-known top-selling brand may be made by 10 or more manufacturers. Naturally, counterfeiters have the capability to sell their products at very low prices.

Without sophisticated equipment, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish the original from counterfeits.

I believe this is one aspect of the pharmaceutical business that we should *not* learn from India.—**ALEX PEREZ, Sacred Heart Street, San Antonio, Makati City**

Support the DOH program for cheaper drugs

FIRST, I want to express my admiration for the Department of Health (DOH), its leadership and staff. For the first time in a long while, this government agency has developed and implemented a program that has a very definite impact on the lives of average and poor Filipino citizens like myself. The drive to import drugs from other countries and sell them at lower prices in the local market is a wake-up call for the multinational giants who seem not to care for people, but quite simply, for profits.

It has been more than a year now since I watched my uncle die slowly because of cancer. It was a difficult time for us, especially for the wife and three sons my uncle left behind. The inability to save him was as much a reality to us: the truckload of medication and the best doctors; everything an exercise in futility.

Soon after the ordeal, we faced another reality: the cost of having tried to save a loved one dawned on us. The pain of losing my uncle grew exponentially when we added up the amount of money that it took to buy him a fighting chance. As people who cared for him, there would have been no channel that we would not have exhausted—no matter how expensive the medicine or the treatment—just for the chance, however slim, to rescue him. Alas, it was his time.

"For everything there is a season, a time and purpose under heaven." This comes from the Bible: its message is clear. For some things, we just have to let God, for others we must act. The time for silence is over. We Filipinos should demand better lives. Lives become easier when we're healthy, and, we can only remain healthy if medicine is cheap.

Thus, this is a call to my fellow countrymen: support the drug importation drive of the DOH. This is our chance, our time. It may not come again. Let us demand what is rightfully ours: better lives, better health, cheaper medicine.

Medication is as much a necessity as food, clothing and shelter. In this, our other basic needs, the government has managed to intercede. Why not as easily here? The government is under so much pressure because these giant drug companies already wield so much power that they can influence just about anything. Again, hats off to the DOH for standing its ground.

Lastly, I plead with the drug companies: let not your legacy be the executioners of the poor; make it your social responsibility to recognize that the needs of the many outweigh the need of the corporate few.—**CELSO C. CABALLERO III, Unit 2D, 104 Main Ave., Cubao, Quezon City**

A provincial hospital worth emulating

MY family and I used to go to a private hospital or clinic whenever we need medical attention. But last June 2001 I suffered from excruciating episodes of abdominal pains of an intensity that left me exhausted, drained and weak. Bulacan Provincial Hospital came into my mind that I decided to be brought there despite the worry that services, facilities and doctors there are not the best. Negative feedback is the cause of this perception.

Upon my admission, a Dr. Ballado accommodated me well and gave me a pain reliever to ease my agony at that moment. While Dr. Jose Ravelo T. Bartolome, a surgeon and my attending doctor, checked me up and thoroughly explained all the details and required a series of lab tests. As a result, I was scheduled for a cholesystectomy.

My doctor and the rest of his team—Doctors Trinidad, Caluag and Adel—other nurses and staff fully proved to me what wonderful professionals government physicians are.

In particular, Dr. Bart did not ask who his patient was but what mattered to him was the quick and proper remedy that should be given to people in need of medical assistance. These young doctors used modern and updated methods in treating their patients as they took charge of me during my confinement. They are all worthy of commendation.

Dr. Charlie Santos, the hospital director, should be given credit too, for doing a great job in changing the image of BPH. This new project of Gov. Josie de la Cruz is very timely. Her constituents particularly in Malolos, will not travel anymore to Manila in case of urgent hospital matters.—**HERRACLEA V. LEGASPI, 297 A. Bonifacio St. Purok 3, San Pablo, Malolos, Bulacan**

LETTERS

Evasion is an admission of lying

A SIGNIFICANT incident occurred during the Senate hearing last Aug. 30 when Sen. Panfilo Lacson asked Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes the question "All right, sir?" The response was something to the effect that Reyes was still under oath.

To PMA graduates, the response should have been "All right, sir." Reyes' response evaded answering in the appropriate PMA answer "All right, sir" if he was telling the truth. The significance of the question is lost on the general public, but not to PMA graduates, particularly those who were at the hearing, such as Senators Rodolfo Biazon and Gregorio Honasan, and all the AFP generals, and on us who saw the incident on TV and read about it in the papers.

What was it all about? In the Philippine Military Academy, there is one system that is held sacrosanct by all cadets, and eventually by all its graduates, and this is the honor system. The honor system demands of all cadets to be truthful when confronted with situations that demand total honesty. A cadet may violate any number of rules and regulations, but when caught and asked "All right, sir" he must admit his crimes and be punished under the rules of the organization.

In effect, the honor system demands a self-incriminatory answer. On the other hand, if the cadet is not "all right" but answers "all right" he violates the honor code and must suffer the ultimate punishment of dismissal from the academy and ostracism forever by all its graduates. Thus, it would be acceptable for a cadet to answer "not all right" or not to answer at all and be punished, but he retains his honor as a PMA graduate. Even if he is telling 99 percent of the truth, he cannot still answer "all right." The code demands an absolutely truthful response.

To us PMA graduates, particularly the members of PMA Class '55, the Senate incident gave us a clue as to who was telling the truth.—**LT. GEN. SALVADOR M. MISON, AFP (ret.), COL. FELIX GUERRERO, PA (ret.), Col. ROMEO SOLINA, PA (ret.), R.A. Solina, Marcelo Green Village, Parañaque City**

How much longer can we go on with our present Constitution?

SPEAKER Jose de Venecia deserves to be commended for courageously declaring his stand on constitutional reforms which have long been neglected by most of our leaders who are prone to favor political expediency.

Our present multi-party system must be blamed mainly for the election of Joseph E. Estrada whose dissolute lifestyle has brought shame and scandal to the Filipino nation. Our centralized form of government is what has fomented the lawlessness and disorder in Mindanao. Our presidential system which gives extraordinary, even absurd powers, to the President has encouraged corruption and inefficiencies in the government services. Our electoral system has left vital areas in our country without senatorial representation and the JBC feature of our judicial branch has made a mockery of the independence of our judiciary.

The fuse is getting short. Time is running out for our country before it blows up into total anarchy and degradation. How much longer can we bear the terrible consequences of an ill-designed Constitution?—**EXEQUIEL B. GARCIA, past president, Philconsa**

Data bank being built on rare ailment

WE, Melon Recto-Silverio, Belinda Olivares-Cunanan and myself, would like to acknowledge receipt of the letter regarding Subacute Sclerosing Panencephalitis or SSPE from Raymund Edward R. David, MD, Department of Pediatrics, Mount Sinai School of Medicine at Elmhurst, New York, USA.

The information we gathered from the doctors at the Philippine General Hospital and the Internet agrees with his statements. True, the treatments are expensive and promise no cures at all.

Indeed, we would be very glad if the good doctor can send us more information regarding the disease, the modes of treatments and other relevant data. PGH is now starting a Philippine data bank on SSPE and we are coordinating with them. The main reason that propels us to raise funds for these indigent patients is the need to assuage, even if only a little, the emotional and physical sufferings and financial worries of the patient and their families. In the Philippines, families, no matter how poor, can never turn their backs even if the illness is terminal or offers poor prognosis. As of Aug. 28, there are at least 52 SSPE cases registered at PGH. We are now assisting three, including Jon Jon, our first case.

SSPE is more prevalent in the Philippines as it strikes malnourished children and cases come one after the other. We want to help those at the early stages of SSPE. We are now calling on parents and the health centers nationwide to intensify their campaign on measles immunization and vaccinate children before 12 months. SSPE also attacks mostly male children.—**MANDY NAVASERO, 1935 Dominga St., Pasay City**

Some costly equipment can be made here

ONE day, the water service collector knocked quite loudly on our door and asked for the immediate payment of our water bill. We knew we had no unpaid back accounts and the due date for the next bill was in the early part of the incoming month yet. This was not the way he used to do it. He would just leave the notice at the gate and go away. Why the change in his routine and the apparent rush now?

My father thinks that they now exert extra effort to collect because the company is running short of money He thinks that the money the water company used to buy their equipment was in dollars. And this time they need more pesos to pay for the same amount of dollars.

Why did they have to borrow to buy? Why did they not make the needed equipment here? Daddy gave me an example where he fabricated a part of the cooling intake of a thermal plant for only P750,000. This way he gave work to the men at a machine shop in Manila. If he had imported the part, he would have paid 10 times more, and the machine shop workers would not have had work to do.—**EVELYN VILLANUEVA PINLAC c/o Adolfo Molina Pinlac, P.O. Box EA110, Ermita, Manila**

PHILIPPINE SOCIETY OF MEDICAL ONCOLOGY
15TH ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC CONVENTION
September 6-7, 2001
EDSA Shangri-la Hotel
Mandaluyong City

MESSAGE

The Philippine Society of Medical Oncology Annual Convention highlights a series of lectures focusing on gastrointestinal malignancies, as it enters its 15th year since inception. The Organizing Committee has worked hard to bring to this meeting esteemed experts in their respective fields to take on the most recent advances and exciting updates in scientific and clinical research.

The optimal management of the different gastrointestinal malignancies is rapidly evolving. A multidisciplinary team consisting of medical, surgical and radiation oncology, pathology, gastroenterology and international radiology are involved in rendering treatment recommendation for individual patients with the diagnosis of gastrointestinal cancer.

The educational objectives and expected outcomes remain, as in previous PSMO Annual Conventions, interaction between medical professionals, up-to-date talks and fruitful discussions of relevant topics of this important field.

Even though we are striving to be a vibrant and prospering society, we must work hard to ensure our longevity. We need constant renewal and revitalization, which requires the influx and participation of young members.

It is vitally important that our younger members be actively involved in our governance and activities and from this group will emerge the leaders of our society.

There is plenty of work to be done and plenty of opportunities to express one's creativity and leadership.

Priscilla B. Caguiao, MD
President, PSMO

SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

September 6, 2001 Thursday

8:00 - 8:30 AM	OPENING CEREMONIES
8:30 - 9:30 AM	4th Dr. Bernardino Agustin Memorial Lecture "Hepatocellular Carcinoma" Speaker: RAYMOND LIANG MD Queen Mary Hospital Pokfulam, Hong Kong
9:30 - 10:00 AM	OPENING OF EXHIBITS
10:00 - 10:30 AM	COFFEE BREAK
10:30 - 11:30 AM	PLENARY SESSION I "PANCREATIC CANCER" Speaker: EILEEN O'REILLY, MD Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center New York, NY
11:30 - 1:00 PM	LUNCH BREAK
1:00 - 2:00 PM	PLENARY SESSION II "COLORECTAL CARCINOMA" Speaker: GEORGE A. FISHER, MD Stanford University Medical School Palo Alto, California
2:00 - 3:30 PM	CONVENTION SYMPOSIUM I "Multimodality Management of Esophageal Carcinoma" Medical Oncologist: EILEEN O'REILLY, MD Surgical Oncologist: MARK KHO, MD Radiation Oncologist: CHRISTOPHER WILLET, MD Mass General Hossspital Boston, MA
3:30 - 4:00 PM	COFFEE BREAK
4:00 - 5:00 PM	INTERACTIVE SESSION Speakers: EILEEN O'REILLY, MD CHRISTOPHER WILLET, MD RAYMOND LIANG, MD
5:00 - 6:30 PM	PSMO BUSINESS MEETING

September 7, 2001 Friday

8:00 - 10:45 AM	RESEARCH FORUM
10:45 -11:30 AM	PLENARY SESSION III "HELICOBACTER PYLORI IN GASTRIC CANCER" Speaker: RANDY MERCADO, MD St. Lukes Medical Center
11:30 - 12:15 AM	PLENARY SESSION IV "NEW TECHNOLOGIES: PETSCAN" Speaker: HENRY W.D. YEUNG, MD Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center
12:15 - 1:15 PM	LUNCH BREAK
1:15 - 2:45 PM	CONVENTION SYMPOSIUM II "Controversies in the Management of Locally Advanced Rectal Cancer" Medical Oncologist: GEORGE FISHER, MD Surgical Oncologist: ALBERTO ROXAS, MD Radiation Oncologists: CHRISTOPHER WILLETT, MD MIRIAM JOY C. CALAGUAS, MD
2:45 - 3:00 PM	COFFEE BREAK
3:00 - 4:00 PM	CONVENTION SYMPOSIUM III "GI LYMPHOMA" Speakers: Pathologist: JANUARIO D. VELOSO, MD Medical Oncologist: PRISCILLA CAGUIAO, MD Surgical Oncologist: CONRADO CAJUCOM, MD
4:00 - 4:45 PM	CONVENTION SYMPOSIUM III "GASTROINTESTINAL SARCOMA" Medical Oncologist: GINA PANUNCIALMAN, MD Surgical Oncologist: SAMUEL D. ANG, MD
4:45 - 5:00 PM	CLOSING CEREMONIES
6:00 PM	FELLOWSHIP DINNER

Corporate Sponsored Satellite Sessions

September 5, 2001 Wednesday

7:00 - 10:00 PM	SATELLITE SESSION "Setting New Standard in the Treatment of Advanced Breast Cancer" Speaker: PROF. STEVE BIRRELL Sponsor: NOVARTIS

September 6, 2001 Thursday

7:00 - 10:00 PM	SATELLITE SESSION II "Nosocomial Prevalence and Resistance Survey Updates" Speaker: ADRIAN C. PENA, MD Sponsor: MERCK SHARP & DOHME PHILS.

LAY FORUM ON GASTROINTESTINAL CANCER

September 8, 2001 9-11:30 am Saturday
Mactan Ballroom 1 & 2

- SIGNS, SYMPTOMS & DIAGNOSIS OF G.I. CANCERS
  John Pangilinan, MD
- NUTRITIONAL PROBLEMS & SUPPORT FOR G.I. CANCERS
  Jonathn Asprer, MD
- HOW TO HANDLE COMPLICATIONS OF RADIOTHERAPY
  Gaudencio Vega, MD
- SURGICAL ASPECTS & COMPLICATIONS IN G.I. CANCERS
  Conrado C. Cajucom, MD
- CHEMOTHERAPHY & THE G.I. CANCER PATIENT
  Ma. Isabel B. Romana, MD

The WORLD

LUVERNE B. GUECO, EDITOR

US, Israel walk out of race meet

DURBAN, South Africa—The United States and Israel pulled out of the World Conference Against Racism on Monday, denouncing efforts to condemn Israel in the meeting's proposed declaration.

In a statement released in Durban, US Secretary of State Colin Powell, who had remained in Washington, criticized the draft declaration's "hateful language."

"Today I have instructed our representatives at the World Conference Against Racism to return home. I have taken this decision with regret because of the importance of the international fight against racism and the contribution that this conference could have made to it," Powell said.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan called the US withdrawal "unfortunate."

"In these circumstances each country should be at the table to discuss," he said, during a visit to Rwanda. "I would have preferred that the US was there."

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres announced in Israel that the Jewish state was also pulling out because of anti-Israel and anti-Semitic comments in the proposed declaration.

"The Durban conference is a farce," said Peres, who won the 1994 Nobel Peace Prize along with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and then-Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

The Arab League led a concerted effort to single out Israel and blame it in unacceptable terms for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, he said.

Several Jewish delegations at the conference were pulling out as well, according to Shimon Samuels, an official with the Simon Wiesenthal Center and chair of the Jewish caucus. Samuels also called on the European Union to leave because European leaders working to mediate the dispute "had seen themselves snubbed."

The European Union said in a statement it would stay at the conference and endorsed a new proposal by South Africa to draft a completely new text on the Middle East. *AP*

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Massive quake predicted to hit South Asia soon

But gov'ts ignoring warning

NEW DELHI—Seismologists are dismissing it as alarmist, governments are ignoring it and people on the street seem indifferent to a US study that warns South Asia is overdue for a massive earthquake.

The researchers recently said tremendous underground stress built up in the 2,000-km Himalayan fault could force a rupture soon—in geological terms—and produce a great quake of 8.1 to 8.3 magnitude.

Such a quake could affect some 50 million people in India, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Bhutan, they said, and kill at least 200,000.

Although images of the devastating earthquake that struck the western Indian state of Gujarat in January are still fresh in their minds, people in New Delhi expressed little worry about the prediction.

"What can we do even if we know an earthquake is about to hit Delhi? There's nowhere to hide," said Neeta Lal, sitting behind the counter of her pharmacy. "See what happened in Gujarat? When your time comes, it comes."

At least 14,000 people died and tens of thousands of homes were destroyed when a 7.9 magnitude quake shook Gujarat on Jan. 26.

Seismologists in the region, while agreeing with the study led by Roger Bilham of the University of Colorado, Boulder, said the US team's findings were not new. They also stressed that they could not predict when a quake might happen with any helpful accuracy.

"Bilham says the earthquake could strike `very soon, geologically.' In geological terms, this could mean a hundred years," said Janardan Negi, scientist emeritus at India's National Geophysical Research Institute in Hyderabad.

Seismologists at the Indian government's meteorological department in the capital also dismissed the predictions as alarmist.

"I don't understand why this is big news. Ten years ago he said the same thing—that an earthquake would occur maybe in 100 years' time," said scientist S.N. Bhattacharya.

However, building professionals in New Delhi said they believed Bilham's estimate of casualties was conservative.

"I hate to think what the scene would be if a Gujarat type earthquake struck New Delhi," said Sudhir Vohra, an architect who specializes in designing buildings for areas prone to quakes. "Earthquakes don't kill people. It's shoddy construction that kills." *AP*

New shark attack in US

WASHINGTON—Another swimmer was killed by a shark on the US East Coast late Monday, sending jitters among thousands of beachgoers and sparking a heated debate about what could behind the new aggressiveness of the ocean's most feared predator.

The attack brings to two the number of people killed by sharks in the United States in just three days. About three dozen others have been injured since the beginning of the year.

Monday's fatal incident occurred when a man swimming with his wife off Cape Hatteras in North Carolina's Outer Banks was attacked and fatally mauled by a shark of unknown species at about 6 p.m., according to hospital officials and sharkattack.com, a website that monitors shark attacks. *AFP*

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12 hurt as suicide bomber strikes in Jerusalem

JERUSALEM—A Palestinian suicide bomber disguised as a bearded ultra-Orthodox Jew blew himself up in West Jerusalem yesterday, wounding at least 12 people, after police stopped him on the pavement for questioning.

"Policemen saw that he was an Arab who dressed up as a Jew and stopped him," Jerusalem police chief Mickey Levy told reporters. "They prevented a much greater tragedy by stopping him before he could reach a busier area."

Levy said the bomber wore the black garb of a devout Jew and a fake beard. He blew himself up on the edge of the ultra-Orthodox Jewish neighborhood of Mea Shearim.

The explosion occurred around 7:45 a.m. on central Nivvim Street in downtown Jerusalem, a block from a pizza restaurant where a Palestinian suicide bomber killed 15 people on Aug. 9.

Bikur Holim hospital, near the scene of the blast, said it treated 12 people, including the two police officers who challenged the bomber. One of the officers was critically wounded.

The incident took place so close to the hospital that staff who heard the blast went outside and pulled wounded inside.

Levy said the suicide bomber "was blown completely apart."

Several cars were damaged in the explosion, which coincided with efforts by Javier Solana, the European Union's foreign policy chief, to arrange talks between Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.

Solana was to meet Arafat in the Gaza Strip later in the day.

Reuters

Saddam's cousin defects

AMMAN, Jordan—A cousin of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein said in Jordan Monday that he was seeking somewhere "secure" to live.

But he later retracted his statements, apparently in fear of reprisals from the Iraqi regime.

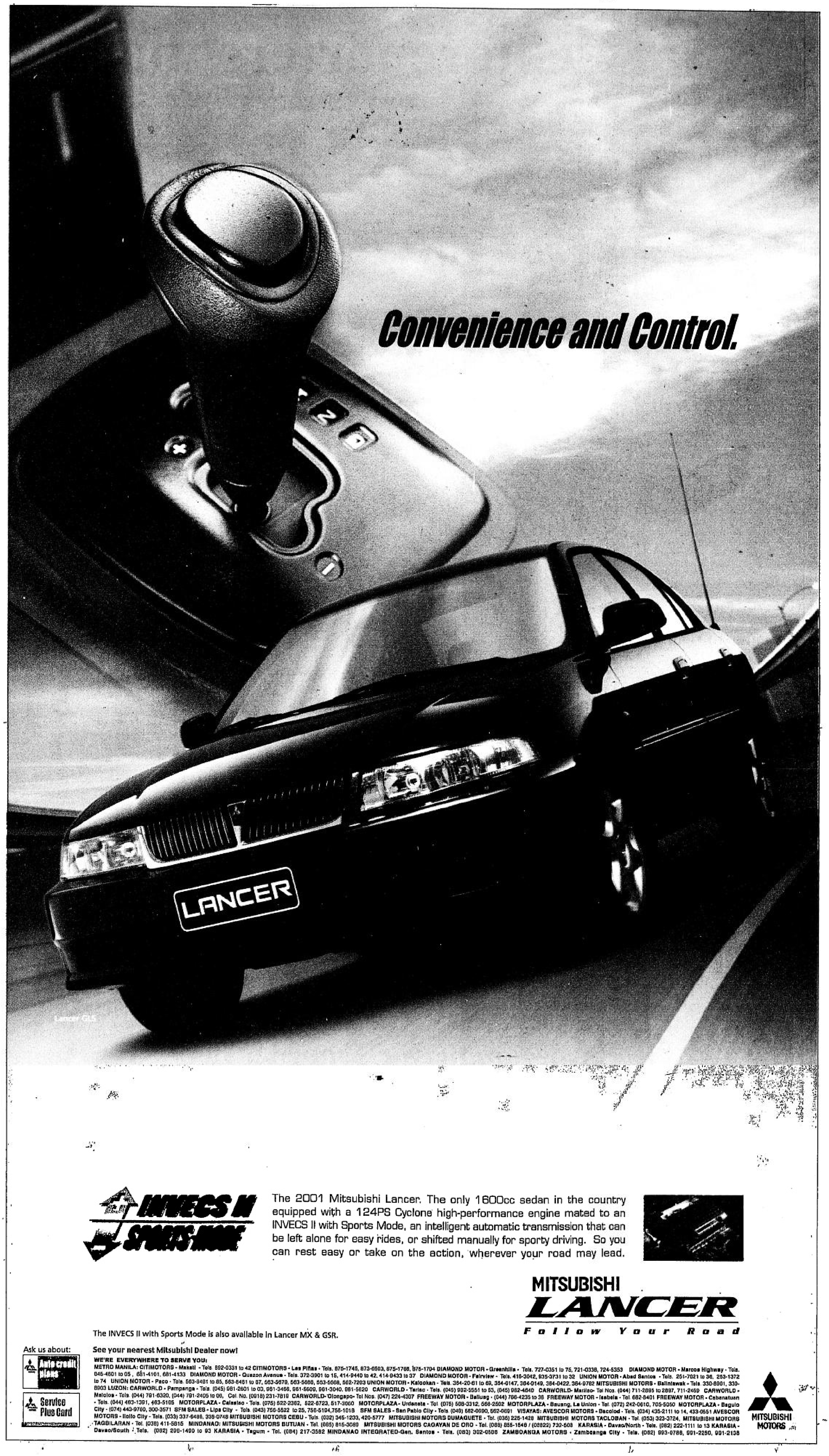
Alaa' Abdul-Qader Suleiman al-Majid, 46, said he left Iraq two and a half months ago on an official business trip to Morocco and has not returned to Baghdad since. He arrived in Jordan Saturday.

Just 10 days ago, al-Majid developed problems with the Iraqi regime, prompting him to seek asylum in a third Arab country, Iraqi dissidents said on condition of anonymity. They declined to elaborate.

Al-Majid said in a telephone interview Monday that he had problems with Saddam's regime, but later retracted those remarks.

From 1970-1990, al-Majid was a personal aide to Saddam. The Iraqi dissident sources said he has been working in the Iraqi Intelligence Directorate since 1990. This could not be immediately verified.

Al-Majid is also the nephew of Ali Hassan al-Majid, a close confidant of Saddam. *AP*



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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern and Central Luzon will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Baguio	Cloudy with rains	Hi 22° Lo 16°
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with rains	Hi 31° Lo 22°
Laoag	Cloudy with rains	Hi 29° Lo 24°
Clark Zone	Cloudy with rains	Hi 30° Lo 23°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 22°
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 24°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 23°
Bacolod	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Roxas	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 25°
Cebu	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 24°
Tacloban	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 24°
Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 23°
Davao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/09/05/01

ROUNDUP

800 dengue cases

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan—At least 800 dengue fever cases have been recorded in the province as of August, provincial health officials said. Provincial health office records showed that the number of people afflicted with dengue this year has tripled compared to last year's figures. The fifth dengue fatality recorded in Pangasinan this year was a five-month-old baby girl from Bolinao town. Gov. Victor Agbayani ordered the 14 public hospitals in the province to treat dengue patients for free and provide them with medicines.

Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Marcelo Del Pilar day

BULACAN, Bulacan—Officials and journalists in the province are urging Congress to enact a law declaring the annual observance of the birth of hero Marcelo H. del Pilar, a native of this town, a national holiday to honor his contributions to the birth of the nation. The province celebrated on Aug. 30 the 151st birth anniversary of Del Pilar, considered the father of Philippine journalism.

Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk

323 Mangyan scholars

MANSALAY, Oriental Mindoro—Hanunuo Mangyans are now assured of finishing their elementary, high school and even college courses after the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples awarded 323 of them scholarships. Oriental Mindoro Rep. Alfonso Umali Jr. said the scholarship awards, worth some P5 million, were part of his "congressional initiative" to provide education for the Mangyans. The recipients will be given tuition, stipend and book allowances until they finish their courses.

Joel Jabal, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

1 slain in police duel

TABACO CITY—Jests and heckles between two members of this city's police station turned into a duel that resulted in the death of SPO3 Alberto Bragais. SPO1 Eduardo Geroche yesterday killed Bragais, who fired at but missed the suspect with his .38-cal. revolver. Geroche, armed with an M-16 Armalite rifle, retaliated and hit the victim in the face. Bragais died on the spot. Geroche surrendered and was detained pending the filing of charges. Chief Insp. Nilo Berdin, city police chief, said "below-the-belt jokes" are normal in the police organization.

Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Bouncing checks

DAVAO CITY—Courts here have imposed a higher docketing fee to discourage businessmen from using the courts to speed up collection. The seven courts of justice here have been swamped with complaints of bouncing checks or violation of Batas Pambansa 22. Regional Trial Court Executive Judge Virginia Europa said they have observed that complainants are just using the courts to speed up their collection, eating up the time of both judges and clerks of city courts. Once paid the complainants lose interest in pursuing the cases.

Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Drugs drop-off points

DAVAO CITY—Police here have identified Maguindanao and Cotabato City as the sources of illegal drugs distributed in southern Mindanao. Senior Supt. Alex Paul Monteagudo, chief of the Special Task Group-Mindanao Area Office, said the areas have become the drop-off points of huge supplies of illegal drugs, particularly shabu. From there, suspected drug couriers use ambulances and trucks loaded with farm products to move the contraband. Supt. Efren Alcuizar, chief of the Regional Anti-Narcotics Office, confirmed Monteagudo's observation but added that Tawi-Tawi is in the list of entry points.

Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Tourism efforts lauded

LAOAG CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo urged local officials to improve the tourist services and facilities of the Laoag International Airport to draw more passengers and tourists. In a press dialogue here Sunday, the President noted how Laoag's tourism industry had improved its tourism share with the operation of more international flights mainly from Asian countries, "Local officials should invest in a new terminal building for the transit passengers here. It will be a viable economic investment . . .," she said. *Cristina Arzadon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Cebu reporters' ban lifted

BY RIANNE TECSON
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Citing humanitarian reasons, Mayor Tomas Osmeña lifted the "ban" he imposed on reporters of two media outlets, which, he claimed, were used by his political rivals during the May 14 elections.

Starting yesterday, Osmeña said reporters of Sun*Star Cebu and radio station dyHP of the Radio Mindanao Network may join his regular press conferences.

Before the start of his press conference yesterday, the mayor surprised reporters covering city hall when he summoned Jasmin Suma-oy, Sun*Star Cebu chief of reporters, who was then waiting outside his office.

He said Suma-oy may now join his press conference because he has decided to lift the ban.

When asked what made him change his mind, Osmeña said he was doing it for "humanitarian reasons."

But the mayor said his decision to lift the ban had nothing to do with the coming "Press Freedom Week" in Cebu, which will be held from Sept. 16 to 22.

"Why? Am I stifling press freedom (with the imposition of the ban)?" Osmeña responded when asked if the lifting of the ban had anything to do with the weeklong celebration.

The mayor clarified that he may re-impose the ban a few months before the 2004 elections.

Sun*Star Cebu managing editor Michelle So declined to comment on the lifting of ban, saying she has yet to discuss the matter with the paper's other editors.

Lawyer Cynthia Barte, dyHP station manager, said she was happy that the ban was lifted.

"At least we have acquired a climate that will keep us from being hostile," she said. "We will always assure him (Osmeña) that we always wanted to have a good relationship with (local) officials."

Yesterday would have marked the second month when Osmeña prevented reporters of Sun*Star Cebu and dyHP from attending his first press conference, which was held three days after he assumed office on July 1.

Osmeña had explained that the ban was his way of making a statement that the two media outfits had political agenda, claiming that these were allegedly used during the May 14 elections.

Sun*Star Cebu is owned by the Garcia family whose scion, former Mayor Alvin Garcia, is Osmeña's bitter political rival.

Garcia ran for a third term in the May 14 elections but Osmeña defeated him in what was dubbed as Cebu's closest mayoral race in recent years.

Barte's husband, Venustiano, was a candidate for councilor under Garcia's party, Kugi Uswag Sugbo (Kusug). Barte is president of the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster sa Pilipinas–Cebu chapter.

The KBP in Cebu had appealed to Osmeña to lift the ban. The two other daily newspapers in the city, the Cebu Daily News and The Freeman, had also written editorials opposing the ban as an affront to press freedom.

The City Hall Association of Reporters in Media (Charm), an organization of reporters covering city hall, had also asked Osmeña to reconsider the ban.

At that time, Osmeña was steadfast in his stand that the ban would stay for as long as Barte is the station manager of dyHP and the Garcias continue to own Sun*Star Cebu.

But yesterday, the mayor changed his mind.

MATATAGO KA!
Pres. GLORIA ARROYO
NCIP - KALINGA

PRESIDENT'S MEN

TOOTS SOBERANO

No rarer occasion could Kalinga men get the chance to don their tribal attires than the first ever visit by a President to one of the province's remotest towns, Tinglayan. It was a visit worth the streamer that says 'Long Live' and the various ways with which these men spent their time waiting.

Firefighters accused of abandoning posts

BY NESTOR BURGOS
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The Iloilo provincial board is investigating reports that firefighters were playing a card game called "*tong-its*" when a fire destroyed Sept. 1 about 400 stalls in the public market of Sara town, 102 kilometers north of here.

Board member Angel Briones, committee chair on public order and safety, said his committee will invite the town mayor, police chief, fire marshal and witnesses during the first hearing on Sept. 1.

Board Member Victor Salcedo II demanded the investigation in a speech Monday.

Salcedo, who was Sara town mayor from 1976 to 1986, said he received reports that personnel of the town's fire station were not in their posts when the fire broke out.

He said the damage would have been lesser if the firefighters responded promptly. The fire scene was only 200 meters from the fire station.

About P50 million worth of property was destroyed and three firefighters were injured in the 6:30 p.m. fire.

Residents and firefighters said it was the biggest fire in the town this year.

Provincial fire marshal Julian Mandario said the fire started from a stall and quickly spread. Four stalls had already been destroyed by the time the fire trucks arrived, Mandario said.

At least 11 fire trucks from other towns in Iloilo and Dumarao town, Capiz, came to help. The fire was put out 9:10 a.m.

Salcedo said he was told that the firefighters were having a drinking party and were gambling in Barangay De Vera, some 3 kilometers from the fire station.

"The key of the fire truck was reportedly with one of the firefighters (in Barangay De Vera). That's why it took them longer to respond," he said.

He said the fire truck was low on fuel and water when it arrived at the scene of the fire.

"The reports are untrue. Our people were having dinner behind the fire station when they received the fire alarm," Mandario said.

"The second fire truck from Estancia town, 33 kilometers from Sara, arrived around 20 minutes after our personnel in Sara responded," he said.

Mandario, however, admitted that volunteers were in Barangay De Vera that day. "They may have been mistaken as personnel of the (towns') Bureau of Fire Protection," he said.

Suspect in mayor's murder flees RP

CAMP GENERAL ALEJO SANTOS, Bulacan—A suspect in the December 2000 murder of Doña Remedios Trinidad Mayor Esteban Paulino and his two aides had left the country, police officials here said on Tuesday.

Senior Supt. Edgardo Acuña, Bulacan police director, said PO3 Felix Valencia, the main suspect in the murder, had left for the United States even before the May 14 elections to preempt the issuance of an arrest warrant against him by the Department of Justice.

Acuña said the provincial police would ask the Bureau of Immigration to facilitate the extradition of Valencia from the United States.

Judge Basilio Gabo Jr. of the regional trial court in Malolos town ordered in July the arrest of Valencia and his six companions.

Valencia denied involvement in the killing of Paulino, his nephew Mariel Jim Venturina and security aide PO1 Teofilo Avellanosa in December last year.

"We are the real victims here. My husband could not commit the murder as claimed by the Paulinos. The late mayor had several enemies. Why do they blame my husband for the mayor's death?" said Valencia's wife Lory.

Valencia ran and lost to Paulino's widow Evelyn in the mayoral race in Doña Remedios Trinidad in the May 14 elections. He resigned from the Philippine National Police after he ran for mayor. ***Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

Mass graves worry NDF, says Army

PROSPERIDAD, Agusan del Sur—Self-exiled communist leaders had issued orders to their followers here to prevent more mass graves of victims of communist executions from being discovered, the military has claimed.

Brig. Gen. Alfonso Dagudag, 4th Infantry Division chief, said the order came from Jose Ma. Sison, alleged founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines who is now in self-exile in The Netherlands.

"Sison's directive also indicated that those who guided the military to the mass graves be punished to set an example for those who would act as guides in the future," Dagudag told the INQUIRER.

The 4th ID has so far discovered three mass gravesites in Misamis Oriental and unearthed 196 skeletal remains of alleged victims of the NPA.

The latest site was found in Barangay Bunal, Salay, where relatives of the victims, who survived the purge, personally guided government troopers to shallow graves.

But human rights groups Karapatan and the Promotion of Church People's Response said the military should answer charges of human rights violations.

The two groups said the abuses were rampant in four villages in Salay town.

Among the abuses committed, the groups said, were illegal arrests, detention and harassment of residents who were allegedly forced to confess membership in the NPA.

The groups also said soldiers burned farmers' huts, stole pieces of their property and farm animals.

The 4th ID denied the allegations and said it would search for more mass graves.

"The move of the CPP and the NDF to initiate measures to cover up the atrocities committed by their armed group is an indication that they are trying to prevent the international community from knowing (what) the communist movement has (done) to . . . innocent Filipinos," Dagudag said.

Butch Enerio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Army engineers take over ₱2-B irrigation plan

DAVAO CITY—The construction of the long-delayed Malitubog-Maridagao (Malmar) irrigation project in Carmen, North Cotabato, will go full blast as soon as it is turned over to three brigades of Army engineers.

Col. Fred Castro, chief of the Army's 55th Engineer Brigade, said his command, the Bukidnon-based 52nd EB and the Matanog-based 54th EB, were planning to send battalions of engineering soldiers to continue the P2.7 billion irrigation project.

Engineers of the China Import Export Technologies Inc., have slowed their construction activities when one of its officials, Zhang Zhong Quiang, was abducted on June 20.

Also abducted were Davao-based Filipino-Chinese businessman Edwin Lim and Chinese engineers Zhang Zhong Yee, Wang Shung Li, and Zhong Zhing, who were on their way to deliver a P5 million ransom demanded by the abductors.

Quiang and Yee were killed in a rescue operation launched by the military.

The Chinese firm's contract ends on Sept. 19.

Castro said President Macapagal-Arroyo last week met with Philippine Army commanders and discussed the Malmar irrigation project.

Castro said they have already surveyed the project site.

Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

THE 17TH ANNUAL
OSMEÑA
FORUM ON VALUES

One of the best accolades given to President Sergio Osmeña came from his predecessor, Manuel Luis Quezon, who said that, "*...the freedom we now enjoy is due to the vision and unselfish services of Osmeña to our country, especially during our formative years.*"

Freedom was so valued by Sergio Osmeña that during the Philippine independence missions to the U.S., he graciously gave way to the Tydings-McDuffie Law which Quezon championed, in place of the Hare-Hawes Cutting Bill for which he tirelessly labored. Clearly, to Sergio Osmeña freedom was of a higher value than personal glory.

This resurgent love of freedom by Filipinos provided the impetus to the Philippine People Power uprising of February 1986. In turn, it inspired subsequent 'people power' revolts in both Asia and European countries. In all these 'people power' movements were countless 'Osmeñas' willing to sacrifice themselves for the paramount value of freedom.

In its humble way, CAP pays tribute to the memory of President Sergio Osmeña by conducting the Annual Pres. Osmeña Forum on Values. CAP has also erected a nine-foot bronze statue in front of his former home and set up the Osmeña Memorabilia at the second floor of the edifice.

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Teodoro L. Locsin, Jr.
Congressman,
1st District of Makati

Theme:
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INQUIRER Northern Luzon

JUN BANDAYREL, Editor ■ ROLANDO B. FERNANDEZ, Bureau Chief

THOMASITES IN BAGUIO

'Good morning, Merry Sunshine'

BY FRANK CIMATU
Baguio City

CLOSE to 600 American teachers came to the Philippines 100 years ago aboard the ship Thomas. The vessel was a converted cattle cruiser so the Thomasites, in a "noble and quixotic mission of teaching in little known and remote islands," are in a way our ancestors' first glimpse of American cowboys and cowgirls.

"I well remember how frightened the people were at their first sight of an American woman and even dainties, like sardines, failing to tempt them to come near me," recalled Alice Kelly of her experience in Bua village in Itogon, Benguet.

In a few years, the Thomasites were able to make their mark in Philippine education. One of the decisions made by the American educators upon the arrival of the Thomasites is that all instructions would be in English.

For Alice Kelly, it turned out to be a comedy.

She tried to teach the people of Bua to respond to her morning greeting with "Good morning, Miss Kelly" and eventually whenever the Bua people would meet another visitor, they would invariably greet them, morning or night, with "Good morning, Miss Kelly."

During the Thomasites' centennial celebration last Saturday at the Brent School in Baguio City, oldtimers recalled their encounters with the American pioneers. Their stories always went back to the Americans' insistence to make all mornings good and bright.

Cecile Hamada Afable, editor-in-chief of the Baguio Midland Courier, said her first teacher at the Baguio Central School (recently renamed Josefa Cariño Elementary School in honor of Afable's mother who donated the land where the school now stands) was an American, a certain Miss Norton.

Toilet paper

"The first thing I learned from Miss Norton was how to use a toilet paper. She would ask us to bring a towel, a piece of soap and a toothbrush. She also taught us to greet her with 'Good morning, Merry Sunshine,'" Afable recalled.

She also recalled more than 70 years ago when Miss Norton showed them a picture of a carabao and since her Ilocano, Tagalog, Pangasinan and Ibaloi classmates gave different answers, they were united by Norton's carabao.

In Grade 4, Afable remembered a British teacher named Miss Lidette who taught English with a British accent.

Miss Lidette tutored Afable on the King's English during her free time in exchange for good coffee. Eventually, her good command of English made her the envy among her classmates at the University of the Philippines, Afable said.

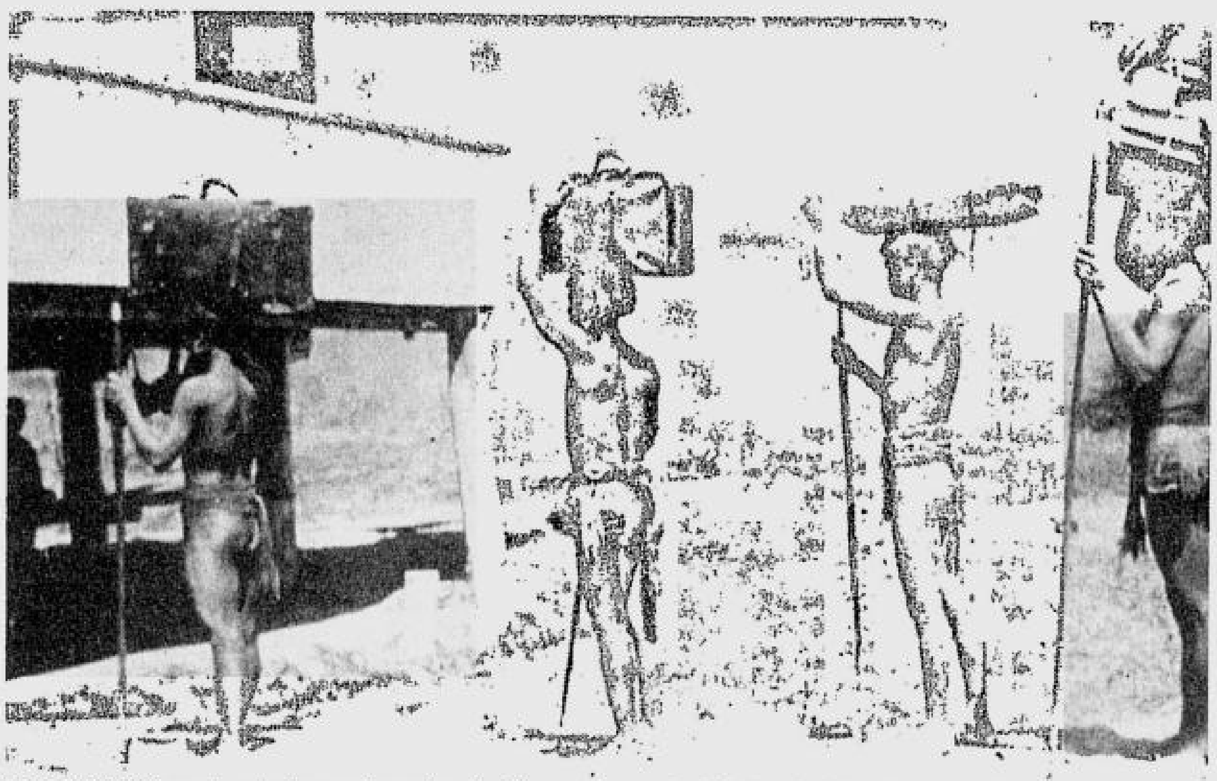
Louise Orendain, a retired journalist and editor of the defunct Baguio Weekly Bulletin, also recalled Miss Lidette.

"She was slender and a personable old lady who always greet you 'Good morning' with the widest smile," Orendain said.

She also recalled a Thomasite named Arthur McCann who taught at the Mountain Province High School (now the Baguio City National High School). McCann taught his students baseball and the school team soon became the best in the lot.

"They always won their game. I recalled the softball contests between the MPHS and the plebes from the Philippine Military Academy at the Athletic Bowl and the PMA was always massacred," Orendain said. McCann's best player was Eugene Pucay, after whom the Eugene Pucay Softball Cup is now played in his honor.

"I was not fortunate to have a Thomasite as a teacher—I grew up with nuns—but I wish I had," Orendain said. She said the Thomasites' legacy was not only teaching Filipinos good English but making them value good education.


THE NATIVE Igorots acted as porters when the Thomasites arrived in Baguio City at the turn of the 20th century, as shown in this photo taken from the collection of Brent School in Baguio. PHOTO REPRODUCTION BY TOOTS SOBERANO

Another Baguio old-timer, Dr. Fe Balagot-Atanacio, had to make a report on the Thomasites while she was studying at the Baguio Central School. She didn't know where to get information on the Thomasites until she asked her father.

"Why didn't you ask me sooner?" Atanacio recalled her father telling her. "The best years in my life was with the Thomasites."

Her father, it turned out, was 15 when a Thomasite came to La Union. He passed a placement test allowing him to enroll in Grade 5. A year after graduating from elementary at 18 years old, he was asked to teach in Baguio.

In 1918, he got married. A Thomasite was his wedding sponsor. The wedding gift was for him to become a supervising teacher in Apayao, with year-old Fe tagging along. The Balagots returned to Baguio in 1921.

According to the "Progress of Education in the Philippines" by W.W. Marquardt, there were only 2,496 Filipino teachers in 1903, compared to 723 American teachers.

In 1913, there were 7,003 Filipino teachers compared to 658 American teachers. In 1923, there were only 330 American teachers but 24,406 Filipino schoolteachers. In 1923, there were 6,590 school gardens and 2,758 school libraries compared to zero in 1903.

Biggest legacy

Former Baguio Mayor Virginia de Guia said she, too, was educated by the Americans but noted that it was not baseball and good hygiene that was the Thomasites' biggest legacy.

"It was their energy and passion, almost like Pygmalion creating Baguio as the Galathea," she said. Pygmalion was the legendary sculptor whose greatest creation was the female Galathea.

De Guia said the Americans brought in the most famous urban planner and architect at that time, Daniel Burnham, to make the blueprint of Baguio and the best engineers to follow the design to the letter.

In April 1908, 241 Thomasites already held the Philippine Teachers' Vacation Assembly in Baguio.

"The American teacher in the Philippines has an almost equal share of drawbacks and advantages. Though a business and profession there, it has been best done with some spirit of the missionary," William D. MacClintock said in the January 1909 issue of The World Today.

"But he has the enthusiasm of those who plant new civilizations, who see their work prosper rapidly, and who, in most cases, find themselves centers of tangible social and moral influence."

In first sending the Thomasites, the Americans were serious in leaving a tangible social and moral influence. "Their intentions were good because they brought in teachers, engineers and designers, not lawyers," De Guia said.

History in Baguio's streets, landmarks

BY JOVELYN REYES
Baguio City

BAGUIO is probably the only "American city" existing in the Philippines today. The architecture of its government buildings, its summer cottages and parks, and its streets are testaments to the influence of its American founders who conquered the Cordillera highland in the 1900s.

DAYTOY TI AMIANAN

Baguio turned 92 on Sept. 1 and has survived the countless upheavals that altered its landscape. It witnessed the horrors of World War II and the devastation wrought by the killer earthquake of 1990.

Known to many as the "Summer Capital of the Philippines," Baguio was built as a colonial hill station of the Americans at the turn of the 20th century.

Nestled 1,500 meters above sea level on the plateaus of Benguet, Baguio became the official residence and recreational center of American officers and citizens in the Philippines who either wanted to recuperate from illnesses or to simply get away from the heat of the tropics.

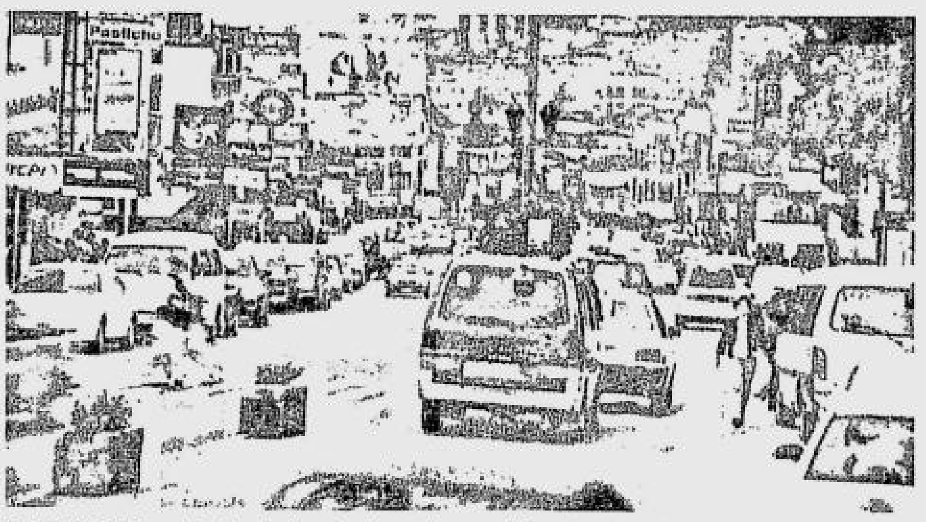
Roads, landmarks

As one of the country's top tourist destinations, Baguio draws an average of 50,000 tourists a month, according to records of the local Philippine Tourism Authority (PTA).

But Nida Gabriel of the PTA said only a few tourist guides and residents knew the historical figures behind the city's "American-sounding" street names.

"Tourists sometimes come to our office and ask for leaflets explaining the historical backgrounds of the city's main thoroughfares," she said.

SESSION RD.
GOV. PARK RD.
STREET signs bear the name of a Baguio City founding father and a historical event. One sign should have read Gov. Pack Rd.


SESSION Road today is the busiest thoroughfare in Baguio.
PHOTOS BY TOOTS SOBERANO

The city's main routes were named after American consuls and officials who introduced early civilization and development in this mountain resort as early as 1900. The road construction was modeled after the British and Dutch mountain resorts in South Asia and the Netherlands East Indies.

Kennon Road. One of the most important routes linking Baguio to the rest of the country is the scenic Kennon Road, earlier called Benguet Road. It was designed to be the main link of Dagupan in Pangasinan, where the Philippine railway then ended, to the mountain provinces being developed by the Americans at the turn of the 20th century.

The more than 50-kilometer Kennon was carved out of the mountainsides of Rosario, La Union, and Tuba, Benguet. It was named after American Maj. Lyman W. Kennon, the man who completed the construction of the controversial Benguet Road in 1905.

Kennon inherited the construction of the road in 1903 and completed it in January 1905. The road had cost the American government more than $1 million, the most expensive engineering work at that time.

It was also Kennon who drove the first wagon to Baguio that same year.

Three years after, American Governor General Leonard Wood issued an executive order naming the road after Kennon.

Session Road. The city's central business district is along Session Road. Just southwest of the road, on the spot where the Baden Powell Inn now stands, was the headquarters of the Philippine Commission where its first session was held.

The road's present name was derived from the first session of the Philippine Commission.

Gov. Pack Road. Near the commission's headquarters was the house of Gov. William F. Pack who served as Mt. Province governor for 10 years. His house was one of the few buildings erected south west of Session, now commonly known as Gov. Pack Road.

The road had served as the Americans main wagon station and now the city's main bus terminal.

Harrison Road. Parallel to Session is Harrison Road, which was named after Governor General Francis Burton Harrison, who was captivated by the beauty of Baguio after a brief visit in 1908. It was also Harrison who supported all public and private efforts designed to foster development of the Benguet hill station.

Leonard Wood Road. Northeast of Session is Leonard Wood Road, named after Col. Leonard Wood, chief of staff of the US Army and said to be one of the best American governor-generals that served the country. Wood introduced structural and other engineering works in Baguio.

Among the landmarks along the pine tree-lined Leonard Wood Road is the Teachers Camp, a convention place for public school teachers and other government and private groups.

Halsema Road. Across the summit of the Bontoc mountain range is a 146-km stretch known as Halsema Road or the Halsema Mountain Highway. Also known as the Baguio-Bontoc Road, Halsema Road was named after Eusebius Julius Halsema, Baguio's mayor from 1920 to 1937.

The Halsema Road traverses Benguet from south to north and includes the highest point, at 2,255 meters above sea level, of all Philippine highways.

Halsema is acknowledged as one of the best American engineers who designed important roads and public structures in Baguio and the Cordillera.

Despite the refusal of the American government to fund the road project, Halsema got help from the local folk. The landslide-prone highway is the only link of Baguio to interior Cordillera. It is an important route used by vegetable farmers in transporting their produce to markets in Benguet and Baguio.

Burnham Park. Baguio's most famous landmark is a manmade lake at the Burnham Park.

The park was named after famed American city planner and landscape architect from Chicago, Daniel Burnham, who was credited for the comprehensive urban design of Baguio in 1905.

Brent Road. Northwest of Session is a road named after Episcopal Bishop Charles Henry Brent, who built the first American school on a sunny hilltop, the Brent International School. The road leading to the school is now known as Brent Road.

Camp John Hay. An example of wonderful landscape gardening is the former John Hay Air Base, which served as a rest and recreation center of the Americans. John Hay was US secretary of state under Presidents William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt.

The old Camp John Hay was the classic American-landscaped recreation paradise dotted with American country cottages and pine trees.

The present-day camp features an 18-hole golf course and is being developed as an international tourism complex.

Wright Park. A horse-riding park originally intended as playground for American children in Barangay Pacdal is now known as the Wright Park. The park was named after Governor General Luke E. Wright, who was among the first Americans who studied the feasibility of building a city in the meadows of Kafagway (Baguio's old name).

Malcolm Square. Another landmark in the city is a small public auditorium at the north end of Session.

The landmark, also known as the People's Park, is Malcolm Square in honor of young American government lawyer George A. Malcolm who drafted the city charter for Baguio in 1909.

According to the book, "E.J. Halsema: Colonial engineer," Malcolm, upon the orders of Governor General William Cameron Forbes, drew up a charter providing for the appointment of the mayor, vice mayor and three members of the city council by the governor general.

Forbes' motive was "to ensure American control over the summer capital by separating it from Benguet."

Japayukis, other OFWs talk about worries, sex

BY AMADÍS MA. GUERRERO

THE NEW "heroes of the nation"—the women overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), including entertainers and so-called Japayukis (those based in Japan)—can be quite emotional about their hard life abroad.

Their worries and anxieties are anchored on their special needs.

Their knowledge about sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), like HIV/AIDS, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) remains inadequate.

They are also concerned about preventing pregnancy, and about maltreatment and abuse in the hands of their foreign bosses and customers.

These fears surfaced during Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) conducted by a group led by Dr. Florence Macagba Tadiar for the Women's Media Circle Foundation Inc. The FGDs were conducted in San Fernando City, La Union, and in Quezon City.

Respondents were 18 entertainers, all of them from Northern and Central Luzon, who had worked in Japan, Singapore, Saipan, Germany, Taiwan, Italy and Cyprus.

The project seeks to protect the health of OFWs and their families, prevent STIs and STDs, and come up with a "survival kit" for men and women OFWs.

According to the women entertainers, they maintained their health by not engaging in sex with "just anyone," using skinless condoms and pills with their boyfriends and customers, taking care of their bodies, having checkups, and keeping a stock of medicines.

They also ate nutritious food, took vitamins and rested in the afternoons.

Frightening experiences

Asked about frightening experiences, the Japayukis mentioned members of the Yakuza, who are "ruthless." One respondent said she and several other Filipinas were scared of all Japanese, and one Yakuza member almost slapped her.

They also feared the possibility of pregnancy, sickness, and (for those without proper accreditation from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration) being sent home. Faced with the latter prospect, some would just run away from the nightclub where they worked.

One Japanese wife found the telephone number of an entertainer in her husband's wallet and threatened to have the Filipina killed.

There were stories about women being killed for refusing to go "all the way."

How did they cope with loneliness and homesickness?

The women said they worked hard, kept themselves extremely busy, tried to forget their homesickness ("*mahirap talaga ang malayo sa pamilya*" [it's really hard to be far from one's family]), prayed a lot ("*taimtim na dasal*"), wrote letters and did things together, like going out to town and shopping.

But if one was overcome by loneliness and cried, the rest followed suit.

STIs and pregnancy were two reasons for being sent back home. So to prevent pregnancy, they made their boyfriends or customers use condoms.

Some men refused, and the entertainers could not just insist on using this method. They sometimes took pills; one used spermicide.

Pure entertainment

Others denied that they had sex with customers: "We just engage in pure entertainment."

The respondents talked about their difficult life abroad, all for the sake of money and to help families make ends meet.

"*Superhirap talaga*," as one put it. They kept late hours ("*puyat*") and sometimes, they got drunk because customers prodded them to drink alcoholic beverages.

One had to be strong ("*tibayan mo ang sikmura*") and without shame ("*kapalan mo ang mukha mo*") because out there, one meets all kinds of people. Some customers are arrogant and crude ("*suplado, bastos*, etc.").

On foreplay, the women from Central Luzon were more candid than their Northern Luzon counterparts. They mentioned drinking alcohol ("*pampainit lang*") and being stimulated by their boyfriends.

The WMC study revealed that many women entertainers knew little about reproductive health and contraception.

Those who engaged in unprotected sex would resort to ineffective methods to protect themselves from pregnancy, like standing up during and after the act, drinking Coke ("*sabi ng iba*"), withdrawal and being on top of the man "so the sperms will flow out."

The respondents said they heard that some of their colleagues had been found positive for AIDS or had STD.

Oust-Lacson drive starts

(From page A1)

volvement in drug trafficking had "clouded (his) integrity and consequently weakened public trust" in him.

They said Lacson's continued stay in the Senate would "not only besmirch but also destabilize the very institution."

They resolved to ask the Senate through its ethics and other committees to start "expulsion proceedings" against Lacson, and to call for his resignation "together with the rest of civil society and the military."

In a separate resolution, the participants said they would form a "civil society volunteer group" that would "work with the military establishment to effectively crush narco-politics" in the country.

Among the groups represented at the summit were the Couples for Christ, Good Shepherd Sisters and Sanlakas.

Representing the military and police were the Association of General and Flag Officers (Agfo), Federation of Retired Commissioned and Enlisted Soldiers (Forces), and some members of Classes 1965, '66 and '67 of the Philippine Military Academy.

Also present at the summit were Forces chair Fortunato Abat, a former defense secretary who was the first to call for the withdrawal of military support from Estrada; Jose "Linggoy" Alcuaz, leader of the ``Silent Movement" against Estrada; and Roberto Lastimoso, former director general of the Philippine National Police.

Retired military generals made a "pledge of commitment" to the spirit of Article 2, Section 3 of the Constitution, which states that the AFP "is the protector of the people and the state."

"In line with this, we commit ourselves to wage war against narco-politics and relentlessly pursue it until we have vanquished all its traces," they said.

Crony criminality

In his speech, Almonte warned that the scourge of "crony capitalism can easily become crony criminality, of which narco-politics is the worst expression."

He said that during Estrada's "mercifully brief" stay in power, narco-politics made inroads and constituted the "eighth circle in the country's hellish descent."

The seven other circles, he said, were gambling, stock manipulation, bribery, extortion, kidnapping, bank robbery and murder.

Almonte recommended that the recall mechanism for local officials provided by the Constitution be expanded to include national leaders like the president, vice president and senators.

PCA secretary general Linda Olaguer Montayre noted that sectors from the "extreme Left to the extreme Right" had again banded together because of the threat posed by narco-politics.

"Are we not in a state of war? Are we not in the face of a clear and present danger?" she said.

Montayre said drug traffickers had besieged Philippine society with their "illegal, diabolical and evil" business.

She said the people were again calling on the military to save the country "because most of our leaders and politicians have failed us."

She urged the military to mount "a coup against the drug lords," saying it was the only agency strong enough to combat narco-politics.

In his own speech, Corpus said "any military junta in this country will fail because it will not get the support of the people."

He declared that the AFP would crush any attempt to put up a junta.

He said the illegal drug trade had become a national security concern because it had merged into the country's politics and economy.

"Using drug money, they can now influence the bureaucracy and even elect a president," Corpus said.

Brig. Gen. Manuel Oxales, Agfo vice chair, said the retired generals were in full support of Corpus' crusade.

"We don't want another Colombia here," Oxales said.

'Deep trouble'

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines is "inclined to believe" Mary's Ong's testimony on the alleged involvement of Lacson and ranking police officers in drug trafficking.

"If what she is saying is true—and we are inclined to believe that she is telling the truth—then our country is in very deep trouble," Msgr. Hernando Coronel, CBCP media director, told the INQUIRER in an interview.

"Well, we condemn it, and we want the pursuit of the truth to continue," he said, adding that the supposed involvement of certain government officials in the activities of the Hong Kong drug triad was "quite alarming."

"It is like being involved with such powerful criminal syndicates like the Mafia," he said.

Coronel said the CBCP was closely watching the conduct of the Senate hearings on Lacson's supposed criminal activities.

He reiterated the CBCP's call for the Senate to continue ferreting out the truth also with regard to the killing of publicist Bubby Dacer, the disappearance of casino employee Edgar Bentain, and the alleged abduction and killing of Chinese nationals.

He said the CBCP was also awaiting the evidence that witness Danny Devnani promised he would present to prove the involvement of Estrada and Lacson in criminal activities.

The militant fisherfolk group Pamalakaya urged the government to fast-track the filing of criminal charges against Lacson and his associates.

"Public opinion endorses the immediate filing of criminal charges against the former chief of the PNP (and his aides), but the Palace has not heeded this tall order," Pamalakaya chair Rodolfo Sambajon said in a statement.

Pamalakaya information officer Gerry Albert-Corpuz said the government should show sincerity in dealing with the accusations against Lacson.

"Rosebud's revelations are not the usual fairy tale staples. The acts are supercrimes against humanity. It is time to file the case People of the Philippines vs. Sen. Panfilo Lacson et al. before an appropriate court," Corpuz said. ***With reports from Norman Bordadora and Andrea Trinidad-Echavez***

Palace: We have nothing to do with it

THE MOVEMENT calling for the expulsion or resignation of Sen. Panfilo Lacson is an effort by nongovernment organizations to air their grievances, and Malacañang has nothing to do with it, President Macapagal-Arroyo's spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said yesterday.

"It's their prerogative. A lot of NGOs are keen on waging what they call a war on narco-politics. We respect their campaign," Tiglao said, adding that the Palace would step in only if the movement extended beyond the limits set by the law.

Asked whether the presence of Col. Victor Corpus meant that the movement had support from Malacañang, Tiglao said the military intelligence chief was at its general meeting merely to serve as a resource person.

"We cannot tell an NGO to shut up or prohibit it from airing its views in public," Tiglao said. "We are not blessing it. I'm emphasizing that this is not a *hao shao* (fly-by-night) NGO. These are recognizable people, they have a track record, and we respect their right to say what they think . . ."

Tiglao pointed out that unlike coup plotters, the leaders of the movement had come out in the open.

"The difference between (those behind coup rumors and) this Lacson Resign movement is that (its) people are not anonymous, which makes a big difference. If you are not anonymous, you subject yourself to accountability in some way at the bar of public opinion," he said.

"(But if you spread coup rumors), either you are a coward (hiding) behind a (cloak) of anonymity or you are in an indefensible position," he added. ***Martin P. Marfil***

Lacson to question accusers

(From page A1)

Lacson was involved in criminal activities.

Two of the witnesses are policemen still in the active service, according to Sen. Rodolfo Biazon.

Senators Joker Arroyo and Edgardo Angara welcomed Lacson's decision to attend today's public hearing.

"He should have attended from the very beginning," Arroyo said.

Angara said it was important that the public hear both sides.

But some senators warned about the danger of Lacson ending up badly bruised by unexpected answers to questions he may throw at some of the "resource persons."

They recalled the "lessons" of the impeachment trial during which questions raised by ousted President Joseph Estrada's lawyers elicited damning statements from prosecution witnesses like Clarissa Ocampo and Emma Lim.

"The lesson in the impeachment trial was: 'Do not ask if you do not know the answer,'' said a senator who asked not to be named. "You cannot predict the answer."

Others warn Lacson, former chief of the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF), may "explode" should he get damning replies from his accusers.

But Lacson remains undaunted, saying he can handle things and "not get irritated" by the answers.

"I'll try to get as much answer as I need when I ask my questions," Lacson told Senate reporters.

He brushed aside suggestions to turn himself into a resource person so that he could finally clear the air on allegations that he was involved in money laundering, drug trafficking, kidnapping and summary executions.

This would require him to sit alongside his accusers and answer questions from senators.

Keep one's dignity

"I won't take the witness stand. I'll be there as a member of the three committees. I'll be there as a member of the Senate," he said. "I will keep my dignity as a senator."

He said he would "take advantage of the privilege hour" should he decide to answer the charges.

Lacson said he was going to confront Ong with the "contradictory statements, inconsistencies" in her four affidavits made at the Office of the Ombudsman, the Department of Justice, the Chinese Embassy and even an embassy of an African country.

Lacson cited Ong's claims that she caught Lacson and PAOCTF agents pilfering illegal drugs seized from an alleged drug lord on May 5, 1998.

But at that time, Estrada was not yet elected President and "PAOCTF was non-existent," Lacson said.

He disclosed that Chief Supt. Reynaldo Acop, former PNP Narcotics Command chief, was "bringing some documents on (Oplan) Athena and Cyclops" to negate Ong's claims.

Oplan Cyclops was a secret police project allegedly involving surveillance, wiretapping and kidnapping while Oplan Athena was an anti-narcotics operation during which police agents allegedly sold confiscated *shabu to* suspected drug lords detained in Camp Crame, according to Ong.

Lacson said he did not attend the four previous Senate hearings because he wanted Ong to tell all before he confronted her with the facts.

"All these accusations will be proven wrong in due time," he said.

In a separate interview, Arroyo, head of the blue ribbon committee, said Lacson could sit either as part of the committee so that he could ask questions or serve as a resource person.

As a resource person, Lacson could have control of the proceedings and get the chance to explain his side on the charges, according to Arroyo.

For his part, Sen. Francisco Pangilinan, chair of the ethics committee, said Lacson could get burned if he asked his accusers certain questions.

"There is a saying in criminal law. If you are not certain of the answer of a witness to a question, don't ask the question," Pangilinan said.

Senators Renato Cayetano and Arroyo said the Senate committees conducting the inquiry into the military's allegations against Lacson would determine whether the revelations made by the witnesses in today's executive session could be disclosed to the public.

Spillover of Edsa II

Senate President Franklin Drilon told a weekly forum that the Senate "reflects a divided nation" in view of the ongoing Senate inquiry into Lacson's past activities.

Drilon said what was happening was a "spillover of Edsa II and the last elections."

Lacson, an opposition senator, was the PNP chief of ousted President Estrada.

The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) said Lacson had nobody else but himself to blame for the accusations hurled against him.

"That fellow Lacson is so pathetic. In his desperation, he has resorted to one of his older fascist tricks—blaming the Left for his predicament. Lacson may now be a senator but his old fascist habits are showing," Bayan secretary general Teodoro Casiño said.

He was reacting to Lacson's statement over radio station dzBB that Bayan, Bayan Muna's Satur Ocampo and other leftist personalities were spearheading a smear campaign against him.

"In the first place, we have no capability to invent an Ador Mawanay, Mary Ong or the many witnesses that have come out in the open to pinpoint Lacson. These people are the creations of General Lacson himself and the PAOCTF. Why should Lacson blame us when their own monsters turn against them?" Casiño said.

Casiño said Lacson had apparently become paranoid of the Left "because of his long list of crimes against our activists, many of whom he killed and tortured during martial law." ***With a report from Andrea Trinidad-Echavez***

What else is new? . . .

(From page A1)

would not only work for Lacson's resignation but also ask the concerned Senate committees to initiate expulsion proceedings against him. *(See story on Page A1.)*

But Sen. Joker Arroyo, chair of the blue ribbon committee, said the Senate could not expel Lacson for the supposed crimes he committed as chief of the Philippine National Police.

Sen. Francisco Pangilinan, chair of the ethics committee, also said there was "no basis" to investigate Lacson if his supposed crimes occurred before he became a senator.

"There will be questions of jurisdiction. We will have to see the complaint," Pangilinan said.

He said his committee would have jurisdiction over the matter only if it were proven true that Lacson was maintaining "active" accounts containing laundered money in banks abroad.

Lacson said he was quite familiar with the people behind the movement. He tagged its backers as former National Security Adviser Jose Almonte, former PNP chief Roberto Lastimoso, and military intelligence chief Col. Victor Corpus.

"So what else is new? I'm no longer surprised by all these," he said.

Asked whether he did not fear that the movement would gather more adherents, Lacson said: "At the end of the day, I always ask: 'Am I at fault?' That's the reason I'm standing here before you. I can look anybody straight in the eye. My conscience is clear."

He said that his record as PNP chief could speak for itself, and that he had reformed the police ranks and rejected bribe offers.

"I did good things in the PNP. I helped many, but in the process I stepped on the toes of some people," Lacson said.

He said the enemies he created then could now be behind the "vilification campaign, including efforts to denigrate my (person)."

Legislative inquiry

Senate President Franklin Drilon emphasized that Lacson was not under investigation in the chamber, and that the ongoing hearings constituted "a legislative inquiry by virtue of the resolutions filed by Senators (Robert) Barbers and (Ramon) Revilla."

"There is no investigation of any senator going on right now," Drilon told reporters.

He pointed out that no complaint was even filed against Lacson before the Senate ethics committee.

Pangilinan confirmed this, and said: "There is a process to be observed . . . We will look into it if a complaint has been filed."

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel described the call for Lacson's expulsion as a "baseless attempt."

He noted that if the basis for the call were Lacson's previous crimes, those remained unresolved in the courts. And if the hearings were being made as basis, he said, these had yet to be concluded.

Pimentel said the movement for Lacson's expulsion or resignation was "psywar" aimed at "weaken(ing) his resolve to stay on as a member of the Senate."

Sen. Vicente Sotto said the "burden of proof" lay on Lacson's accusers. ***With a report from Christine Avendaño***

Rosebud ready, too: Truth is on my side

(From page A1)

Philippine National Police (PNP) and the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF), Ong said: "I will throw the same question to him because I am ready to face him."

Pointing to her chest, Ong said she knew by heart the crimes perpetrated by Lacson and his associates at the PNP.

Ong had also implicated former PNP Narcotics Group head Chief Supt. Reynaldo Acop, Senior Supt. Francisco Villaroman and Supt. John Campos, her former handler and lover.

"Even if I'm sleeping, I can talk about these because I knew what happened," the former undercover agent said.

Military intelligence chief Col. Victor Corpus is also raring to see Lacson before the joint hearings of the Senate blue ribbon, public order and national defense committees.

Corpus, chief of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp), said Lacson may find himself confronting with new witnesses at today's hearing.

"We have new witnesses to corroborate" the testimonies of Ong, Angelo "Ador" Mawanay and Indian national Danny Devnani, Corpus said.

"We are prepared to present to him the evidence we have against him," Corpus said. "We are confident we can convict Lacson."

Even Mawanay is gearing up for Lacson's much awaited appearance at the hearing.

"It will be better indeed if he shows up," said Mawanay, who claims to be a former civilian agent of the PAOCTF.

Mawanay said he had nothing to fear from Lacson anymore because he had evaded attempts to have him assassinated.

He had earlier said that most of his colleagues who performed dirty jobs for Lacson were killed allegedly on orders of Lacson.

"I'm not afraid of him and it's he who should have the reason to fear because of his crimes," Mawanay said.

Suspected Cebu drug lord

Ong's disclosure about drug trafficking in the country has implicated a Chinese-Filipino trader in Cebu.

On Monday night, Ong identified a certain Peter Lim as the alleged drug lord operating in Cebu.

"*Ang alam ko* based *siya* (Lim) *sa* Cebu *at siya ay kaibigan ni* Ping Lacson (What I know is that he is based in Cebu and is a friend of Ping Lacson)," Ong told radio station dyLA.

Ong said Lim was not a member of the Hong Kong triad. But he buys his supply of illegal drugs from a bigger drug lord who is a member of the triad, according to the former antinarcotics agent.

Lawyer Elias Epinosa, who has a client named Peter Lim, said Ong may not be referring to his client.

"That's another incredible story," he said. "Did she know personally my client?" His client is into importation of heavy equipment.

Espinosa said there were other persons named Peter Lim.

Lim's name was included in the list of suspected drug lords exposed by Cebu City Rep. Antonio Cuenco in 1997. He was eventually cleared for lack of evidence.

Espinosa said he was surprised why Lim was being accused as Lacson's friend when his client had been earlier linked to former PNP Chief Roberto Lastimoso.

He said it would be impossible for his client to be friends to both Lacson and Lastimoso. The two are not in good terms.

Corpus confirmed that a Peter Lim was on the Isafp list of suspected drug lords.

But he declined to elaborate, saying "(Lim's) case is still under investigation."

Lacson, in an interview over dyLA, clarified that Lim was not his friend although he knew the businessman.

"*Kakilala ko lang si* Peter Lim in the same manner *na marami akong kakilala sa* Cebu *pero hindi kami magkaibigan* (I know Peter Lim in the same manner that I know a lot of people in Cebu but we are not friends)," Lacson said.

Charges unproven

Lacson said he was aware of rumors about Lim's alleged involvement in illegal drugs but he stressed that these remained unproven.

Ong told dyLA that the Cebu ports were used as entry points of illegal drugs from the Hong Kong triad.

Ong said the Hong Kong triad had also penetrated other major cities in the country.

In fact, she said, Chief Supt. Reynaldo Acop, then Narcom chief, once told her to go to Cebu to conduct a surveillance operation on members of the triad.

Her mission, she said, was to determine the persons the triad members would meet in Cebu and to check on their activities. Ong said she only stayed for two to three days in Cebu.

In Negros Occidental, former Narcom informer Remus Garganera reportedly went into hiding on Monday after Ong implicated him in drug trafficking and kidnapping.

Garganera opted to lie low after Ong threw him into the limelight, said a former Narcom official, who requested anonymity.

During the Senate hearing on Monday, Ong claimed that Garganera was the one who secured the warehouse used in storing illegal drugs while waiting for delivery.

She also claimed that Garganera was the "safekeeper" of kidnap victims.

Ong urged Garganera to come out to either dispute or bolster her claims on the links of Lacson and other top police officials to criminal activities.

The source, who had worked with Supt. John Campos at the Narcom for nearly five years, confirmed that Garganera used to work as a "civilian agent" of Campos.

The source said Garganera was jobless when he came home last year to Negros Occidental. He was able to work with a local government unit in northern Negros Occidental as a member of a security force, the source said. ***With a report from Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau***

Acop admits cops used 'tawas' for photo-ops

(From page A1)

dicates would simply conduct an ambush to recover back their contraband," he said.

Anyway, he said, no reporters would dare touch the "*shabu*" during the presentation because the supposed evidence would be tampered with.

Acop said the *shabu* being presented in court was in the same state when authorities seized the illegal substance from drug traffickers.

Sometimes, fingerprints were lifted from the container of *shabu* to indicate that the illegal drugs indeed changed hands, he said.

"For example, if the seized *shabu* is placed in a plastic and weighs exactly one kilo, this will be presented in court as is," Acop said.

But when *shabu* is turned over in court as evidence, its transfer from the crime laboratory to the court is strictly secured. "Convoys of cars with heavily armed policemen as well as police in motorcycles are tapped to implement the transfer," Acop said.

"It's true we buy *tawas* using intelligence funds and use *tawas* in our presentation to the media but the real haul of *shabu* is in safekeeping and fully accounted for," Acop said.

He disclosed the budget used for buying the *tawas* came from police intelligence funds.

"A kilo of *tawas* costs only P50 compared to thousands of pesos in intelligence funds that the authorities will spend when transporting *shabu*," he said.

Now, Rosebud . . .

(From page A1)

kidnap-for-ransom activities.

But an unflappable Ang-See, who said she was out of the country, told the INQUIRER that Ong had an "overactive imagination."

Ong said Ang-See passed on Chief Supt. Reynaldo Acop a videotape of kidnap victims undergoing torture reportedly at the hands of the Chinese triad. Acop, in turn, passed on the videotape to the media.

The tape, which Ong said was recovered from the safe house where the victims were housed and which Lacson then gave to Ang-See, showed four Chinese nationals who were allegedly victims of the group of Lacson and Acop.

Ang-See said she had not met with or talked to Acop in over a year, but Ong said Ang-See had passed on the tape to Acop only recently. The INQUIRER was the first to report Ong's reference to a videotape.

"I challenge Ang-See to get to the bottom of the truth behind the cases of kidnap-for-ransom instead of keeping silent about summary executions of Chinese nationals," Ong said.

In a faxed statement, Ang-See said she had not been able to follow Ong's testimony during the joint Senate hearings so she wanted to reserve her comments because, she said, she did not want to make "knee-jerk responses to such important news."

However, Ang-See said that based on what she heard from other people, she was inclined to believe that Ong was "suffering from an overactive imagination."

Atong Ang

At the height of the impeachment trial against then President Joseph Estrada in January, Ang-See, spokesperson of the Citizens Action Against Crime, accused presidential friend Charlie "Atong" Ang of being the brains behind a series of kidnappings victimizing ethnic Chinese.

Ang-See is also chair of the Movement for the Restoration of Peace and Order and executive trustee of Kaisa Para Sa Kaunlaran, a Chinese-Filipino nongovernment organization.

At that time, Ang-See said the Chinese-Filipino community had reported Ang's alleged involvement in at least three kidnappings to Estrada himself. The kidnapping of prominent Chinese-Filipinos allegedly masterminded by Ang happened between 1996 and 1998.

Now Ang-See's track record, and her reported closeness to Lacson, has prompted Ong's new allegation.

The significance of the videotape, Ong stressed, is that with it Acop was able to "twist" the story and throw the blame back to the Chinese triad regarding the abduction and eventual murder of the four Chinese victims.

Ong alleged that Acop's men were behind the kidnapping of the four suspected drug lords, including Zeng Kang Fang, one of four Chinese earlier kidnapped along with Wong Kam Chong but later released. Zeng Jiazuan was also among the four kidnapped.

The PAOCTF agents made it appear, however, that the triad "re-kidnapped" Zeng Jiazuan on Jan. 11, 2000.

She told the senators that Zeng Jiazuan's rescue was "staged" by PAOCTF agents led by Supt. Glenn Dumlao. The Chinese was hospitalized with several "drill holes" in his body.

She added that Zeng Jiazuan's family sought police assistance in locating him not long after news of his alleged rescue. "(But) Zeng was never heard from again after the supposed rescue," Ong said.

Baguio hideout

Acop had said the videotape was recovered in Shanghai Chua's hideout in Baguio City. He said Chua was the triad boss who had the four Chinese nationals kidnapped and tortured.

After Zeng Jiazuan's rescue, Acop said, the Chinese even cooperated with his group to identify the kidnappers. Chua was killed in a shootout because of Zeng Jiazuan's help, Acop said.

"After Zeng Jiazuan was rescued, he helped us bag Shanghai Chua. It was because of Zeng Jiazuan that we were able to finally tail Chua, who was killed in a shootout in July 2000."

Asked where Zeng Jiazuan is, Acop said, "He's alive."

But pressed if he would present Zeng Jiazuan at the Senate hearings, Acop said he was not sure.

"I don't know. Last thing I heard, he was killed by the triad in Xiamen. I have yet to confirm that."

TUASON REACTION

Cage conflict is POC matter

By June Navarro

"LEAVE it to the Philippine Olympic Committee."

This was the message of Philippine Sports Commission chair Carlos Tuason two days after the International Basketball Federation gave its recognition to Quinteliano Literal as president of the Basketball Association of the Philippines.

In accrediting Literal, the BAP was also reinstated to the rolls of the Fiba, which suspended the country from participating in international events on June 22.

"We don't want to dip our hands in the BAP issue. It's purely a POC matter," Tuason told the INQUIRER.

POC president Celso Dayrit, in a statement last Monday, said the Olympic body would continue to recognize Gonzalo Puyat II as president of the BAP.

Dayrit added the POC would postpone talks about the BAP controversy until after the SEA Games.

Tuason, however, welcomed the lifting of the Fiba suspension, noting the country can now defend the basketball gold in the Kuala Lumpur Southeast Asian Games on Sept. 8-17 without any impediments.

Tuason also reiterated the PSC's earlier stand of recognizing only those national sports associations which have the blessing of the POC.

Tuason assured that the men's and women's basketball teams, which were formed by Literal, would receive what is due them.

"The allowances will go directly to the athletes," he guaranteed.

Tuason will enplane today in Kuala Lumpur and join the main wave of the 502-strong Philippine delegation, which is tipped to see action in 29 out of the 32 events on tap in the sports conclave.

By tomorrow, Tuason said the whole contingent should be in Malaysia and get the feel of the SEA Games atmosphere.

PSC explains airline change

THE SUDDEN change in the airline that will carry the bulk of the national players and officials to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia for the Southeast Asian Games was made to ensure their comfortability and also save money for the government.

Philippine Sports Commission Chair Butch Tuason issued this clarification in the wake of speculations created by their decision to transfer the core of the local delegation to Singapore Airlines from Malaysian Airlines.

Tuason quickly brushed aside reports that the failure of Malaysian Airlines to upgrade two VIPs in the contingent was the main reason for the transfer.

"The agency which handles the trip offered us a new package and we felt that though it was kind of late, we'll get more out of our money," said Tuason.

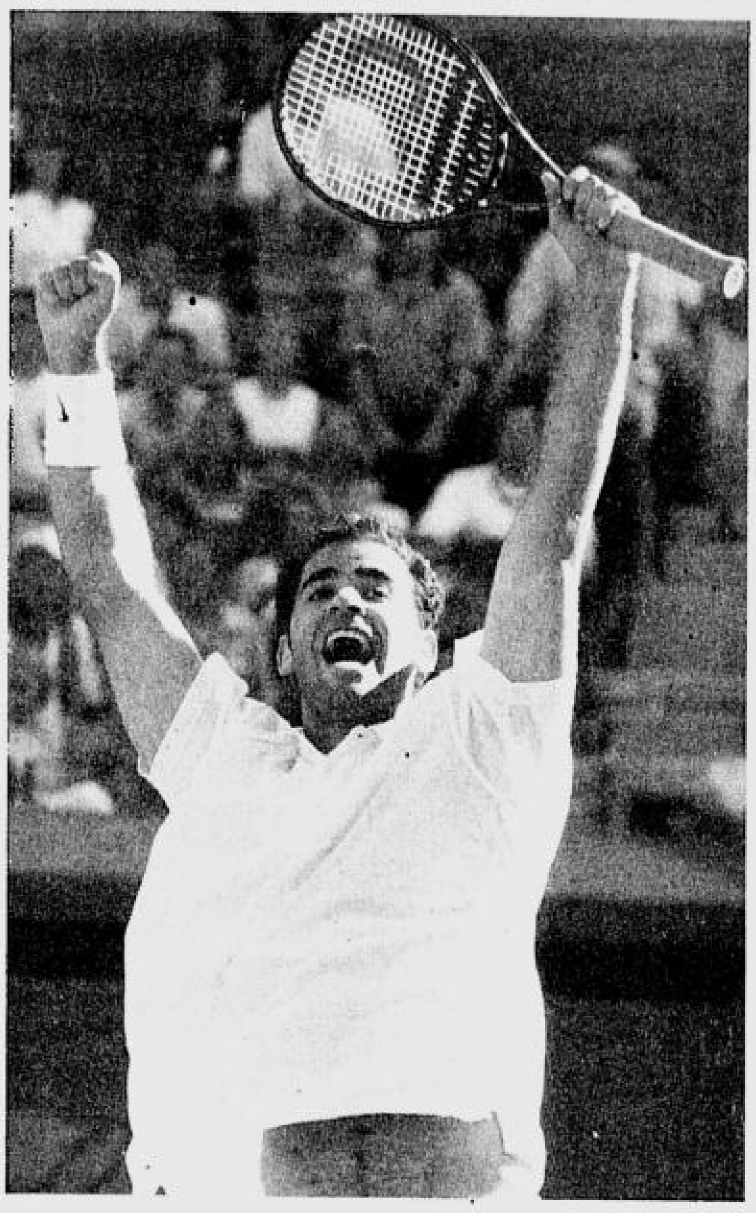
"The upgrading issue was never a serious consideration, all we wanted was the best arrangement for everybody in the team."

Marilou Romero, president of Elite Travel Agency which won the bidding for the trip, said that they had to work out the arrangements with Singapore Airlines due to various reasons.

Singapore, according to Romero, offered a rate $10 (about P500) lower and also pledged to waive overweight charges.

What clinched the deal for Singapore was that it offered a bigger plane that will accommodate the bulk of the delegation compared to a departure by batches with the smaller Malaysian 737 planes.

She also downplayed worries that the shift will inconvenience the delegation which leaves tomorrow for Malaysia.



US OPEN

Pete Sampras jubilates after beating Patrick Rafter, 6-3, 6-2, 6-7, 6-4, on Monday to reach the quarterfinals of the US Open. Andre Agassi set up a meeting Wednesday (Thursday in Manila) against Sampras by beating Roger Federer, 6-1, 6-2, 6-4. In the women's singles, Jennifer Capriati, defending champion Venus Williams and Kim Clijsters also moved to the last eight. AP

Lady boxer gets bonus from Abap

FIRST Asian Women's Boxing Championship lightwelter weight champion Mitchel Martinez received a bonus of P10,000 from Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines president Manny Lopez in appreciation of her efforts in the recent tournament in Bangkapi, Bangkok, Thailand.

"This amount maybe small because ABAP does not have enough budget but we heartedly give it to you for the honor you have given the country at a time when everyone seems to be feeling low.

Congratulations, may you have more success in your future endeavor," said Lopez, who was elated by the team's fourth place finish in just four months of training for the pioneer international women's boxing competition participated in by 10 countries and 60 boxers.

Martinez, together with her coach, Roel Velasco was introduced yesterday to Caltex, the men's main sponsor in boxing tournaments.

Lopez has said over and over again that perhaps from the women boxers might come the Philippines' first-ever Olympic gold medal.

The 25-year-old police officer based at the Camp Philippine National Police's Headquarters Support Services was the lone Filipina gold medalist among seven women boxers sponsored by the Pacific Concrete and Asphalt Mix and ALI Sportswear.

Trinidad vs Hopkins

PUERTO Rican Felix Trinidad fights American Bernard Hopkins for the undisputed world middleweight championship at 9 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 15, (10:30 a.m. Sunday in Manila) in the United States.

The hard-punching Trinidad, the World Boxing Association champion, stakes his immaculate 40-win, 0-loss mark, 33 by knockout, against the equally deadly Bernard Hopkins, the World Boxing Council/International Boxing Federation titlist, who holds a 39-win, 2-loss, 1-draw record with 28 knockouts.

Aptly billed "....and then there was one," the fight card is promoted by Don King Productions Inc.

Also featured are the IBF light flyweight championship between unbeaten champion Ricardo Lopez of Mexico and former IBF titlist Zolani Petelo of South Africa.

Caltex supports Filipino pugs

WITH the Southeast Asian Games just around the corner, Team Caltex's preparations for the boxing events is now at its peak. With the support of Caltex Philippines, the team has been participating in various international tournaments to give its pugilists the needed exposure and experience.

The team has shown its readiness to capture boxing glory in Kuala Lumpur by performing excellently in the tournaments they joined this year. Team Caltex boxers won 4 bronze medals in the Cordova-Cardin Cup and 1 gold, 1 silver and 2 bronzes in the Robert Balado Cup, a big improvement from last year's 1-silver, 1-bronze tally in the Cuban tournaments. Rookie flyweight Violito Payla was adjudged the best foreign boxer in the Robero Balado Cup.

The country's team to the Kuala Lumpur SEA Games this September would be a mix of youth and experience, with first time SEA games campaigners Juanito Magliquian Jr., Harry Tanamor, Vioito Payla, Ramil Zambales, Junie Tizon, Maximino Tabangcora III and Maraon Golez joining battle-tested internationalists Romeo Brin, Reynaldo Galido, Larry Semillano, and Arlan Lerio for the quest for boxing glory.

RP cagers face MBA selection today

By Roy Luarca

THE PHILIPPINE team gets the chance to test its defenses and run its patterns when it tangles with the MBA selection at 5 p.m. today at the Tinga Gym in Taguig.

Their training disrupted by the leadership wrangling in the Basketball Association of the Philippines, the Nationals need to regain their fluidity and cohesion to boost their title-retention drive in the Southeast Asian Games in Kuala Lumpur.

Though they have little difficulty sweeping the Southeast Asian Basketball Association men's championship early this year, the Nationals know that the Thais, the Malaysians, the Indonesians and the Singaporeans are raring to end their cage supremacy in the region.

Romel Adducul, last year's MVP, and John Ferriols, the 1998 MVP, will spearhead the Philippine team which was given the green light by the International Basketball Federation (Fiba) to participate only last Sunday.

The 6-foot-6 Adducul and Omanzie Rodriguez, also 6-foot-6, will be in for a colossal battle inside the shaded lane against MBA selection Fil-Ams Jeffrey Flowers and Rafi Reavis, both 6-foot.

The selection, to be coached by Andok's San Juan mentor Philip Cezar is not wanting in firepower either as it boasts Alex Compton, Chris Clay, Bong Alvarez , Francis Aquino and Cid White; all of whom can light up the scoreboard.

San Juan aces Chris Calaguio and Chito Victolero, Jomar Tierra, Junel Mendiola and Vince Hizon will man the backcourt for national mentor Boyzie Zamar.

Cezar, on the other hand, will be fielding Compton and his LBC Batangas teammates Chuchu Serrano and Tonyboy Espinosa. The exhibition game, to be televised live over National Broadcasting Network (PTV 4), takes the place of the regular doubleheader scheduled for today.

Miñoza eyed for Asia team

MIÑOZA

HONG KONG—Taiwan's Lin Keng-chi and Frankie Miñoza of the Philippines have put themselves in the frame for spots on Asia's team to take on Japan in next year's inaugural Dynasty Cup.

Outstanding performances in the Japan Matchplay Championship at the weekend have left the pair among the favorites to be selected as captain's picks for the Asian team for the Ryder Cup-style shootout at Blue Canyon Country Club in Phuket, Thailand at the end of March. Lin, Asia's top player in 1995, and Miñoza battled into the semifinals of the $660,000 event. Lin won their battle 3 and 2 but lost the final 2 and 1 to Dean Wilson of the United States.

The pair are among a number of Asians playing outside of the Asian tour being considered for the Dynasty Cup team, which will comprise the top eight players in the tour rankings and four picks by captain Hsieh Min-nan.

Other players who could be brought in are Korea's Choi Kyung-ju, who is having a good season on the US PGA Tour, India's Jeev Milkha Singh, who is splitting his playing time between Europe and Japan, and Japan-based Zaw Moe of Myanmar.

With head-to-head golf a rarity on the international scene, the displays of Lin and Miñoza singled them out as potential match winners in the Dynasty Cup. Their wins over top Japanese opponents also showed the likely strength of the Asian team.

Arguably Lin's best performance was his 3 and 2 win over Toru Taniguchi in the quarterfinals. Taniguchi was one of the stars of the World Matchplay Championship in Melbourne at the start of the year, reaching the semifinals before going down to eventual winner Steve Stricker of the United States.

Southwoods bets score in Singapore

MANILA Southwoods' Jerome Delariarte, Angelo Que and Cookie La'O made a good account of themselves against a high-powered cast in the recent 54th Singapore Open Amateur Championship at the Seletar Country Club.

Delariarte emerged the top finisher from the Philippines, placing seventh in the individual race. Que, the back-to-back national champion, wound up 11th while La'O checked in 16th.

The three had originally planned to represent the country in the team competition. Instead, they were forced to play as individuals and not as a team because the National Golf Association of the Philippines did not endorse their participation.

"We did not give them the sanction before they left," said Jake Ayson, the NGAP executive director. "Yet, when they arrived in Singapore, they tried to pass themselves off as having been given the signal to represent the country. That's why Singapore called us up, and we clarified the issue with them immediately."

Ayson said the NGAP did not feel it right giving sanction to the three because "Que did not want to represent the country in the SEA Games and yet, he wanted to play for the country in Singapore. We felt that was an odd thing to do."

Roligon derby unfolds

MORE than 50 entries will compete in the second 3-stag elimination of the BL Showdown 7-Stag National Derby today at the Roligon Mega Cockpit in Parañaque City.

Promoter Danny Ty said that among those who will participate today are Joey and Boboy delos Santos of San Pablo City, Patrick Antonio, Emit San Juan of Bay, Laguna; Lope Dorado of Cebu, Dr. Carreon of Ozamis City and many others.

Ateneo cagers surge to semis

DEFENDING Ateneo crushed Lourdes School (QC), 59-31, last Sunday to make it to the semifinals of the Milo BEST SBP/Passerelle basketball tournament at the Xavier School courts.

With their seventh straight win, the Ateneans completed a sweep of their Group A assignments in the Small Basketeers (SBP) category.

Marist School also earned a semis slot by demolishing Notre Dame of Greater Manila, 60-32, for its sixth win in seven games in Group B.

In other SBP games, La Salle Greenhills whipped Chiang Kai Shek College, 63-16; Xavier School walloped San Beda, 53-35, Southridge School blasted Northfield School, 65-15; and St. Francis of Assisi toppled JASMS, 32-17.

Ateneo also advanced to the Passerelle semis by beating Lourdes School (QC), 73-38, for its sixth successive triumph.

Xavier School spilled Diliman Preparatory School, 67-45, and La Salle Greenhills routed Chiang Kai Shek, 83-25, to tie idle University of Santo Tomas for the Group A lead at 5-1.

Manila Golf posts big upset

MANILA Golf pulled off another surprise this time at the expense of Canlubang to grab a piece of the lead in Group III even as defending champion Wack Wack and Manila Southwoods continued their winning ways in Week 5 of the Federation League matches.

The tandems of Manoling Chan-Philip Romualdez (best ball) and Alex Prieto-Konkoy Tuason provided the decisive wins while JP Reyes and Joey Yujuico earned the go-ahead draw in Manila Golf's 2.5-1.5 victory.

The MGC golfers tied Alabang for the top spot with a 2-0-1 win-draw-loss record while Canlubang took its third defeat in four outings.

Wack Wack scraped past Forest Hills, 2.5-1.5, in their delayed match last Wednesday then got back at Mt. Malarayat, 3.5-5, to surge ahead in Division II with a 3-1-1 slate.

Not to be outdone, Southwoods raced to its fourth straight win with a 4-0 rout of Orchard.

Other matches during the week saw Riviera trashing Orchard, 3.5-.5; Valley downing Canlubang, 3-1; Highlands drawing with CDC Mimosa, 2-2 and Eastridge forging a similar 2-2 draw with Sta. Elena.

Getting its much-needed revenge after a shock loss in the opening matches, Wack Wack turned the tables on Malarayat in its Mandaluyong home course.

Picking up the wins were Marlon Dizon-Ernesto Genato in scramble, Bones Floro-Ernesto Lim in best ball and Tetu Santos-Tukanobu Taira in high low. Kit Lopez and Elphege Wong halved the point with Pitong Quiocho-Gerald Katigbak.

Letran Knights near Final 4 stint

GAMES TODAY (Rizal Memorial Coliseum)
12nn—SSC vs UPHR (jrs/srs)
3 p.m.—JRU vs Mapua (jrs/srs)

LETRAN manhandled San Beda College, 88-67, to move closer to a Final Four stint yesterday in NCAA men's basketball tournament at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

In posting their sixth victory against five setbacks, the Knights moved up to third place, half a game behind second-running Mapua and San Sebastian College, both of which are at 6-4.

Jose Rizal University grabbed the first ticket in the Final Four trip by virtue of its 9-1 record. The Knights dealt the Heavy Bombers' only debacle last week.

In the other varsity game, host Philippine Christian University repeated over defending champion College of St. Benilde, 81-79, to shore up its record to 5-7. The Blazers, who also lost to the Dolphins in the 1st round, slipped to 5-6.

LETRAN 88—Junio 20, Enrile 14, Sta. Cruz 11, Misolas 10, Moreno 8, Sillona 6, Ayo 6, Moody 5, Garcia 4, Syhongpan 2, Pacheco 2, Santos 0, Reyes 0, Anabo 0.

SAN BEDA 67—Reroma 19, Cordero 18, Bombeo 10, Erestain 7, Oliveros 6, Merelos 2, Juco 2, Hudencial 2, Casio 1, Velasco 0, Manding 0, Weber 0, Lumen 0, Arbole 0.

'Sargo' wins it for Django

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

ACCORDING to veteran pool players, the game of pocket billiards is 50 percent break (sargo in local parlance) and 50 percent skill that's why flamboyant Francisco "Django" Bustamante beat American champion Earl "The Pearl" Strickland, 7-6, in the finals Sunday of the World Pool Masters 9-Ball tournament in Essex, England.

"He never made anything on the break while I did and I think that's what counted in the end," said 37-year-old Bustamante, who is now based in Germany where he first worked in 1990 as a resident pro at the poolroom of Rick's Café (named after Humphrey Bogart's saloon in the immortal movie "Casablanca"). Bustamante won $15,000.

"The Filipinos in the audience were amazing. There were so many of them," added Bustamante, who first won the crown in 1998. "I'm so pleased to win this championship again; I'm playing in the US Open next week so it will be great to arrive there with this title in the bag."

With his extraordinary long reach, booming breaks and creativity (like shooting behind his back), Bustamante is always a source of fascination to the fans and a source of pride to his benefactors, brothers Jose "Popit" and Aristeo "Putch" Puyat of Puyat Sports, a non-profit organization which promotes billiards in particular for the main purpose of helping and developing its players. Bustamante's teammate, Efren "Bata" Reyes, defeated reigning Cardiff World Pool champion Mika Immonen of Finland in the quarterfinals, but lost to Strickland in the semis, preventing an all-Filipino finals.

* * *

BLOOPER. In my last column (UAAP unfair to La Salle?), there was a mangled paragraph which should have read as follows: "But last Aug. 24, the UAAP board, headed by Anton Montinola of host school Far Eastern University, decided by a vote of 6-1 to interpret the eligibility rule of "at least three years studying abroad" to mean not three academic years, not three 365-day years, but actually "any portion of any three years." On the basis of this interpretation, La Salle president Bro. Rolando Dizon said the UAAP board seems bent to declare Mark Cardona ineligible and the games wherein he played forfeited!"

As a result, Dizon appealed for justice and fair play to the UAAP board, which, in turn, is expected to render a decision this week.

I agree with Dizon in his plea for justice. What is happening now in the UAAP is really very unfortunate. It is a sad reflection on the kind of basketball leaders we have, basketball leaders who are setting the wrong example to the youth by being locked in bitter conflict just like the warring groups in the hopelessly divided BAP. I say to them, enough is enough.

In March 2001, the UAAP board approved a new eligibility rule; to wit, that effective June, 2001, no athlete who has studied abroad for three years within the past five years will be allowed to play in the UAAP unless he first establishes a two-year residency. However, on Aug. 24, the board voted, 6-1 to interpret the rule of "at least three years" to mean "any portion of any three years."

In the case of Cardona, records will show that since 1996, he had studied abroad for two years and three months at Carson High and not a total of three years! So why should he be ineligible to play in the UAAP? Is the board interpreting this eligibility rule according to their own convenience?

BASEBALL RESULTS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

	W	L	PCT	GB
East				
New York	82	56	.594	—
Boston	71	64	.526	9 1/2
Toronto	67	71	.486	15
Baltimore	55	82	.401	26 1/2
Tampa Bay	49	89	.355	33
Central				
Cleveland	78	60	.565	—
Minnesota	72	65	.525	6
Chicago	69	67	.507	8 1/2
Detroit	55	80	.407	22
Kansas City	55	82	.401	23
West				
x-Seattle	99	39	.717	—
Oakland	81	57	.587	18
Anaheim	70	67	.511	28 1/2
Texas	62	75	.453	36 1/2

x-clinched playoff spot

NATIONAL LEAGUE

	W	L	Pct	GB
East				
Atlanta	74	63	.540	—
Philadelphia	72	65	.525	2
New York	66	72	.478	8 1/2
Florida	63	74	.460	11
Montreal	59	78	.431	15
Central				
Houston	80	57	.584	—
Chicago	77	60	.562	3
St. Louis	74	63	.540	6
Milwaukee	61	76	.445	19
Cincinnati	56	81	.409	24
Pittsburgh	51	86	.372	29
West				
Arizona	78	59	.569	—
San Francisco	76	62	.551	2 1/2
Los Angeles	75	62	.547	3
San Diego	69	69	.500	9 1/2
Colorado	60	76	.441	17 1/2

COMPLETE RESULTS

American League

N.Y. Yankees 7, Toronto 5; Cleveland 6, Chicago White Sox 3; Seattle 3, Tampa Bay 2, 11 innings; Oakland 4, Baltimore 2.

National League

Atlanta 5, Montreal 0; N Y Mets 10, Philadelphia 7, Cincinnati 3, Houston 2; Chicago Cubs 10, Florida 2; Milwaukee 12, Pittsburgh 7, 1st game; Colorado 4, San Francisco 1; Pittsburgh 3, Milwaukee 2, 2nd game; St. Louis 4, San Diego 0. AP

10 YEARS AGO

JENNIFER Capriati defeated Gabriela Sabatini, 6-3, 7-6 (7-1), advancing to the semifinals opposite Monica Seles at the US Open in New York. At 15, Capriati was the youngest semifinalist in the US Open history.

SPORTS ON TV COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

TENNIS: US Open 2001, Men's Fourth Round/Women's Quarter Finals at 7 a.m. (r – 7 p.m.) Men's Quarter Finals/Women's Quarter Finals at 10:30 p.m., Star Sports

GOLF: LPGA First Union Betsy King Classic, Final Round at 10:30 a.m. (r) on ESPN

PGA Air Canada Championship, Third Round at 1:30 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

BASKETBALL: Asian Basketball Show at 11:30 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

BOWLING: Professional Women's Bowling Association at 1:30 p.m. (r) on ESPN

BOXING: Tuesday Night Fights at 9:30 p.m. on ESPN

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ▪ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

93 CAGERS, OFFICIALS

Monico slams bloated BAP list

PUENTEVELLA

CALLING it as utterly lacking in delicadeza, Rep. Monico O. Puentevella questioned yesterday the bloated list of officials joining the basketball delegation to the Kuala Lumpur SEA Games.

Some 93 officials and players have requested accreditation from the Philippine Olympic Committee, with Tiny Literal signing the letter addressed to POC president Cito Dayrit.

While saying he was elated over the Fiba lifting of suspension that paved the country's basketball participation in the Games Sept. 8-17, Puentevella said he was dismayed by Literal's action to bring to Kuala Lumpur the biggest ever basketball contingent "in the history of the SEA Games."

Said Puentevella: "While the elation of the BAP over the lifting of the ban is understandable, I cannot condone the way they have gone overboard in piling up the names for inclusion to the Malaysia trip."

Puentevella said that aside from the 34 men and women comprising the national team, "there are 59 others acting as support personnel and BAP Officials bound for Kuala Lumpur. Just imagine the astronomical expenses involved in funding all these people for the trip."

He said BAP's action was in complete disregard "for delicadeza" in these times of economic crisis.

"How can one like the POC or the PSC accredit this long list of BAP delegation when even one of them, in fact, is being sought by the authorities for alleged involvement in the controversial Jose Velarde case," Puentevella said.

He also noted that the resolution of the BAP leadership row leaves much to be desired.

"The fact remains that there are still two factions contending for the leadership of the BAP, with both sides claiming that they are in the right side. What should have been an internal problem easily resolved through dialogue and compromise has been blown up into a situation of epic proportions especially with the intrusion of a foreign sports organization like Fiba and the involvement of our country's judicial system," said Puentevella. "The only thing that turned out right was our being allowed to participate in the basketball tournament in the SEA Games but the war over the BAP leadership rages on."

Here's the list submitted for accreditation by Literal:

MEN'S TEAM

Officials: T. Literal—Team leader, A. Lina—Team manager, T. Lian—Assistant team manager, E. Ponceja—Liaison officer, D. Zamar—Head coach, C. Polhen—Coach, J. Tam—Coach, G. Ramos—Coach, G. Manuel—Coach, R. Jimenez—Physical therapist, R. Villanueva—FIBA referee, A. Pador—Utility/support staff, F. Gavanilo—Utility

Players: R. Adducul, C. Calaguio, R. Dela Rosa, E. Echavez, J. Ferriols, E. Laure, P. Martin, J. Mendiola, S. Padilla, O. Rodriguez, E. Victolero, V. Hizon

WOMEN'S TEAM

Officials: A. Abaya—Team leader, C. Cuan—Team manager, C. Ramos—Asst. team manager, A. Cristobal—Head coach, C. Pasco—Coach, H. Ong—Coach, T. Talens—Coach, A. Sulit—FIBA referee, C. San Juan—Statistician, G. Bautista—Therapist, N. Mendoza—Support staff, A. Bongapat—Taper, F. Raytos—Utility

Players: S. Bambico, M. Casi, E. Chua, C. Columna, E. Enriquez, S. Gabagat, B. Manalaysay, M. Narciso, C. Reyes, E. Vega, C. Salalila

BAP OFFICIALS, MEMBERS AND STAFF:

B. Alentajan, BAP Executive Vice President; J. Dichaves, BAP Vice President for Luzon; J. Aquino, BAP Vice President for Visayas; R. Abarquez, BAP Vice President for Mindanao; G. Lim, Secretary General; C. Tan, BAP Treasurer; T. Fabico, BAP Auditor; A. Valenzona, Board member; B Mosquito, BAP Director-CARAGA; P. Camingue, Regional Commissioner-CARAGA; E. Avila, BAP Director-Car Region; J.Utsig, Regional commissioner-CAR; H. Abanto, Regional commissioner ARMM; L. Samson, BAP director region I; M. Gatchalian, Regional commisioner-Region I; A. Angeles, BAP director—Region III; R. Angeles, BAP adviser—Region III; J. Lavadia, BAP director-Region V; O. Bascon, BAP Director—Region VI; E. Yap, BAP Deputy Director-Region VI; R. Polido, BAP Regional Commissioner-Region VI; G. Brugat, BAP Director-Region VII; L. Calo, BAP Director-Region VII; J. Bernad, BAP Director-Region IX; R. Medina, BAP Director-Region X; K. Fortich, BAP Deputy Director-Region X; R. Cua, BAP Director-Region XI; M. Jacalan, BAP Director-Region XII; A. Alvarez, Adviser; T. Abundo, National Capital Region Athletic Association; M. Gaston, National Basketball League; D. Lopez, Accreditation Commission; G. Reglo, Referee Commission; D. Soria, National Inter-Club Commission; R. Tumpat, Eligibility Commission; F. Codinera, Technical Commission; Dr. J. Canlas, Medical Commission; S. Lim, Finance Commission; R. Mallari, Journalist; A. Armero, Journalist; R. Boado, Photographer; I. Romero, Technical Liaison; O. Tumibay, Secretariat.

PETRON-RP TEAM STAR

Sydney Olympic veteran Jasmin Strachan (left), a member of the Petron-Philippine Taekwondo Team to the Southeast Asian Games in Malaysia, delivers a leg kick to her opponent in one of her recent international stints. With Strachan on the Petron-RP squad are Eva Marie Ditan, Daleen Cordero, Kalindi Tamayo, Veronica Domingo, Ma. Nelia Sy Ycasas, Margarita Bonifacio, Sally Solis, Roberto Cruz, Tshomlee and Jefferthom Go, Manuel Rivero Sr., Mark Anthony Rivero, Donald Geisler, Dax Morfe and Dindo Simpao.

NBN's Isabelo, PBL's Sy defend Trinidad

TOP officials of the National Broadcasting Network 4 and the Philippine Basketball League yesterday came to the defense of PBL commissioner and sportscaster Chino Trinidad amid the remarks hurled against him by members of the national basketball team to the Southeast Asian Games.

NBN 4 general manager Joey Isabelo and PBL chair Dioceldo Sy said the SEAG-bound cagers led by Romel Adducul are being "used and manipulated to throw a monkey wrench in our (basketball coverage) plans."

Isabelo asked for sobriety from the MBA cagers, who last Monday threatened to boycott the NBN basketball coverage if Trinidad was included in the SEAG coverage panel.

In their letter to Isabelo, the MBA players claimed that Trinidad made some degrading remarks aimed at them, which they described as "downright irresponsible and uncalled for."

Trinidad was supposed to have questioned the cagers' stint in Kuala Lumpur during the recent send-off party at Malacañang.

"If he has a problem with us representing our flag, he should keep his big mouth shut and keep his ill feeling toward his fellow Filipinos," said the cagers in their letter to Isabelo.

But Isabelo said that such complaints should have been relayed to him privately instead of "releasing it intentionally" to the newspapers.

"(We are) saddened because we know you are all intelligent persons, yet you unwittingly or otherwise threatened to boycott our coverage for a flimsy reason like your dislike of one of our anchors," said Isabelo in his letter to the cagers.

TRINIDAD

Sy likewise defended Trinidad and dared the MBA cagers to review the tape and transcript of Trinidad's alleged malicious commentary against the men's basketball team.

"An attack on the personality and credibility of Commissioner Trinidad is likewise an attempt to discredit the PBL itself," said Sy.

Added Sy: "It is sad to see that today in this country some personalities will stop at nothing in dragging Philippine basketball and the rest of the country down in the pits in order to advance their Machiavellian schemes and maneuverings."

The players, coaches and officials who signed the letter addressed to Isabelo were Rommel Adducul, John Ferriols, Eddie Laure, Peter Martin, Omanzie Rodriguez, Chris Calaguio, Chito Victolero, Reuben dela Rosa, Edgar Echavez, Junel Mendiola, Jomar Tierra, Vincent Hizon, David Zamar, Cesar Polhen, Johny Tam, Gerardo Ramos, Gino Manuel, Raphael Jimenez and Allan Pador.

Saulog tops National Super Series

ANGONO, Rizal—Seven-time champion Jovie Saulog of Shell-Yamaha brandished his champion's heart under trying conditions to turn back his closest rivals and rule the action-packed sixth and penultimate leg in the National Super Series 2001: A Race of WG&A at the Eastborough Place here Sunday.

Flashing the form that made him the country's winningest rider from the late '80s up to early '90s, Saulog outduelled Ernie Leongson of Shell-Yamaha and Glen Aguilar of Caltex-KTM in a tight and exciting battle in the pro open category in this prestigious series organized by Hartebeest Entertainment Corp. in cooperation with KIDS Foundation.

Saulog, who also topped the Bicol Open motocross championship in Daraga, Albay two months ago, completed a rare sweep in his trusty Yamaha 4-stroke over Lengson and Aguilar.

Aguilar, however, kept the lead in the overall standings with a six-leg aggregate of 224 points going into the championship round on Sept. 16. Leongson, who won the Guam motocross championship last month, is second overall with 177 points, followed by 1999 champion Jing Leongson in third with 160 points.

Aguilar topped the pro 125 category over Saulog and Leongson.

Also assured of the overall title is Kenneth "Wonder Boy" San Andres of Caltex-KTM, who finished second to Jubenil Abellar of Cebu in the mini category. San Andres has 221 points, 44 points ahead of closest rival Maico Buncio of Shell-Yamaha.

Sharing the limelight in this annual series also sponsored by WG&A Super Ferry, PLDT, Smart, Bench, Norkis-Yamaha, Access Plus, Dreambikes, Superstore, Agua Vida, Transtainer System and Seagull Glassworks is Karl Poculan of Shell-Yamaha.

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WAZZZZUP ?
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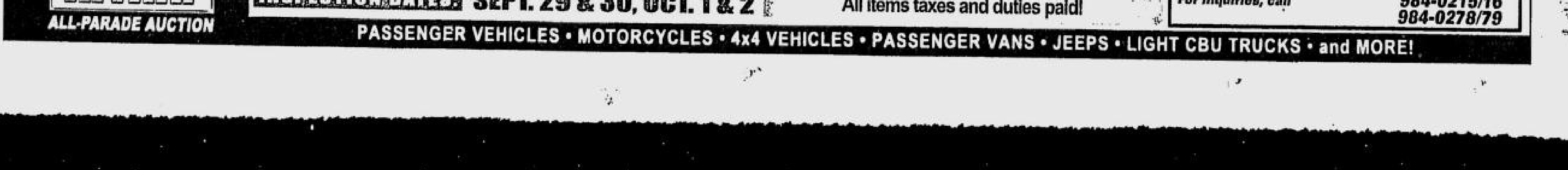

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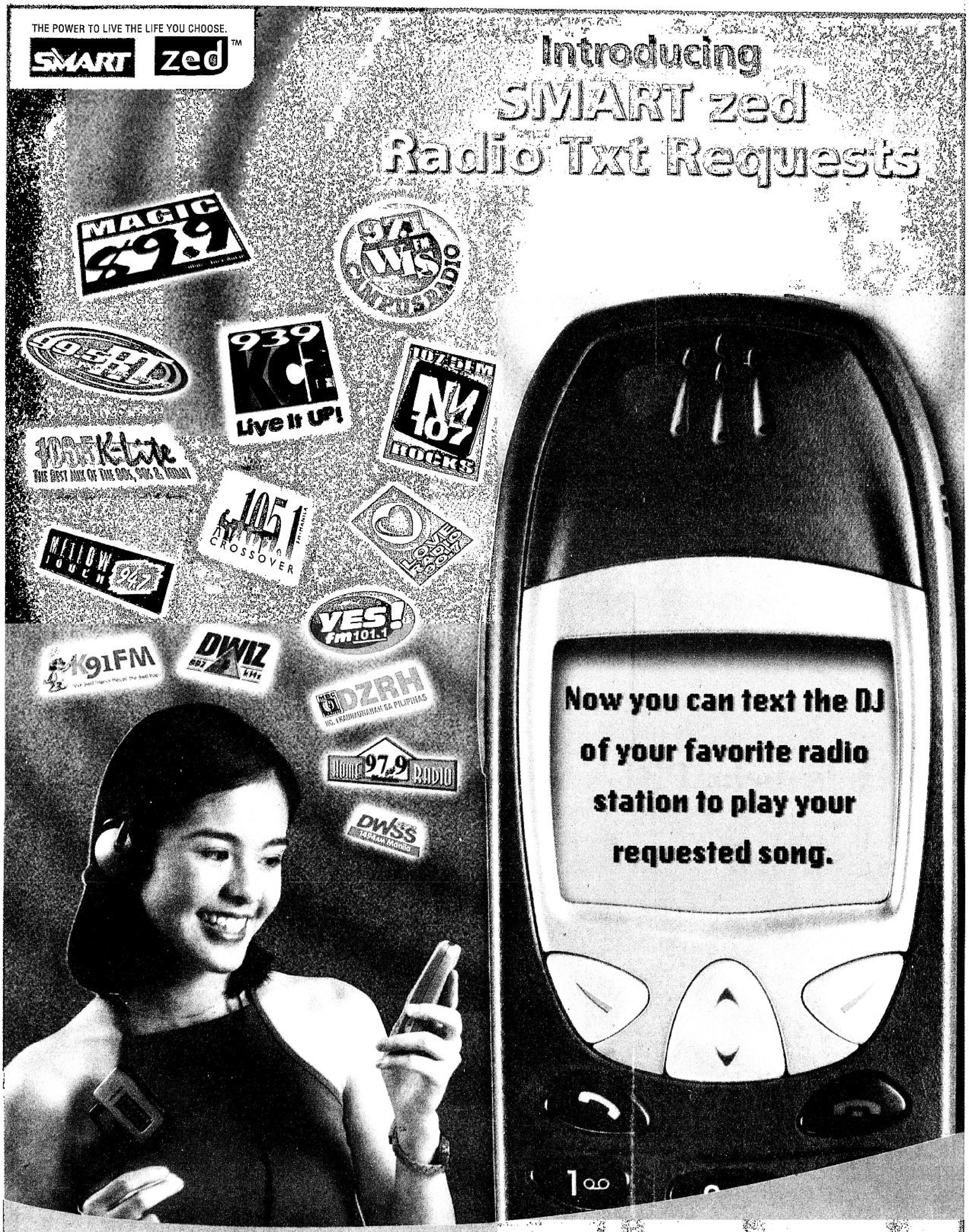
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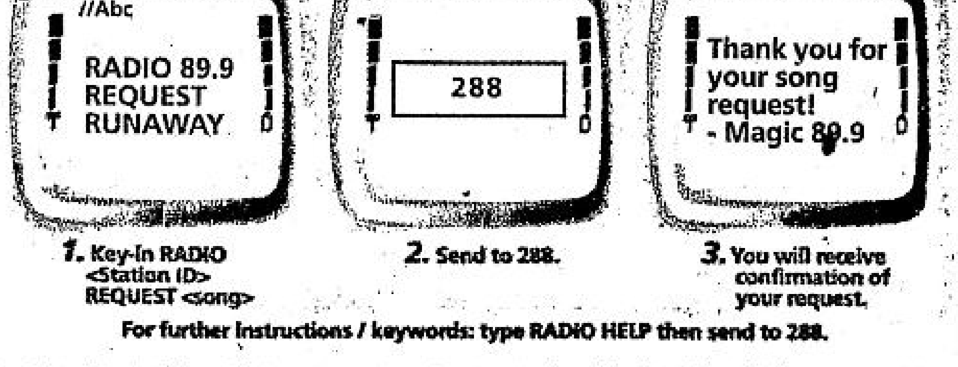
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Aristocrat waiter suspected of American retiree's murder A20
Malonzo still waits A20

METRO

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'I didn't mean to do it,' says baby's strangler

BY PHILIP C. TUBEZA

"I DID not mean to do it."

After more than 24 hours in detention, Dailyn Paniluan, 19, spoke up in her defense in the strangling to death her 3-month-old son in Quezon City.

Paniluan, a former maid and a resident of Goldenshower, Payatas, Quezon City, was supposed to be charged with parricide before the Quezon City prosecutor's office last night, said investigator PO1 Romel Merino of the Central Police District-Criminal Investigation Unit.

Paniluan was arrested before noon Monday after she allegedly killed her only son, 3-month-old Exequiel, inside their home.

The INQUIRER tried again to talk to Dailyn at noon yesterday but she remained silent. But Merino said Paniluan spoke when a television crew asked her for a statement yesterday afternoon.

"She said 'I did not mean it' in Filipino, and then she became silent again," Merino said.

Police are still trying to find out what led Paniluan to kill her child. The baby's father, Paniluan's former employer in Pasay City, has yet to show himself, Merino said.

Investigators theorized that hunger, illegal drugs or mental instability could have driven the young

I DIDN'T A20

Girl home alone falls downstairs, hits head on protruding nail

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

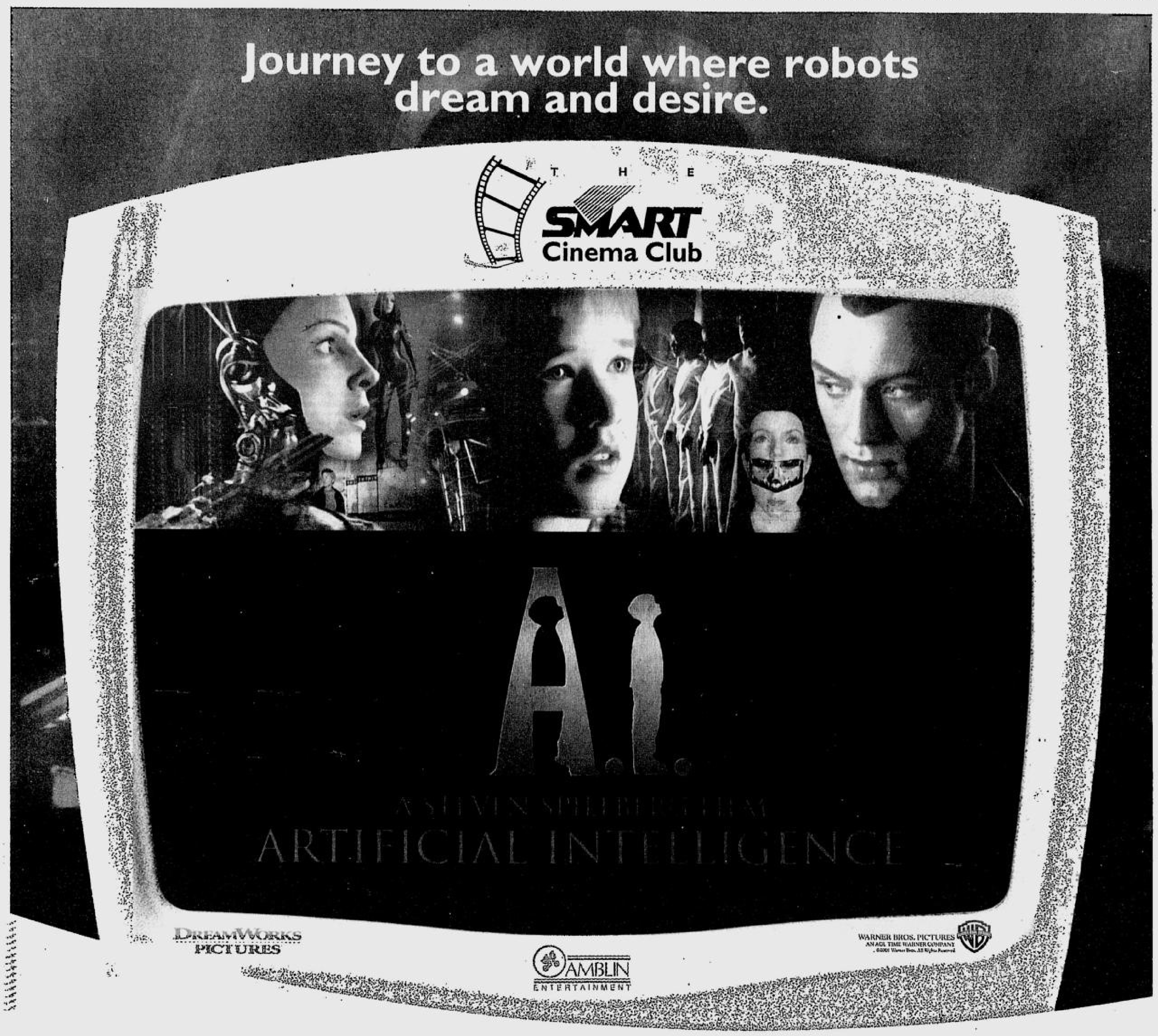
A 3-YEAR-OLD girl is in critical condition after she accidentally fell down the stairs while home alone in Malabon and her head got caught on a nail protruding on the landing yesterday.

Ruben Mesina, the father of Vanessa Joy, found the girl bleeding in the head when he arrived home at the corner of Tinajeros and Rivera streets, police said. The nail had caught the girl in the right temple.

The girl apparently had been bleeding and lying on the floor for about two hours before members of the Caloocan Fire Department arrived about 9 a.m. yesterday, said Caloocan fire chief Insp. Agapito Macario.

The girl's parents had left her home alone when they went off to work, Macario said.

GIRL HOME/ A20



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Aristocrat waiter suspected in American retiree's murder

By Jerome Aning

MEMBERS of the Western Police District on Monday night arrested a 19-year-old waiter of the Aristocrat restaurant in Ermita, Manila as a possible prime suspect in the murder of a retired American teacher last week.

Sonny Boy Ramos, a native of Ilocos Norte and resident of Gregoria de Jesus Street, Caloocan City, is detained at the Western Police District Integrated Jail.

But Chief Insp. Juanito Taluban, WPD homicide section chief, told the Inquirer that the evidence they have at press time was merely circumstantial.

Investigators hope to pin Ramos through the bloody footprints found on the floor near the body of Barth Suretsky, 65.

Police have taken Ramos' footprints and will compare these with those found on the floor.

According to case investigator SPO4 Rodolfo Rival Jr., the waiter was identified by security guards of the Alpha Grand View Hotel on M.H. del Pilar Street as Suretsky's frequent visitor before the foreigner was found dead.

The hotel's video camera also recorded the arrival and departure of Ramos several nights before the murder, but not on the night of the murder itself. But it was possible, the investigator said, that the suspect could have sneaked into the hotel somehow.

Taluban said that if the footprint test failed, they would have no option but to release Ramos. Police have 72 hours, or until Tuesday, to build the case against the waiter.

Suretsky, a retired teacher from New Jersey, was found dead in the bathroom of the hotel's Room 2003 on Aug. 29. He was naked and had been strangled with a nylon cord, bludgeoned and stabbed several times, police said.

In an interview, Ramos vehemently denied having anything to do with the murder, saying he was on duty at Aristocrat along Roxas Boulevard in Malate, when the killing took place.

Ramos said he was on his first week as waiter when he met Suretsky, a restaurant customer, on Aug. 22. He said the American gave him a calling card and said that if Ramos had any financial problems he could go to Suretsky's place anytime.

The waiter said he did go the Alpha Grand View, where the American had been staying for more than a year, on Aug. 24, 25 and 26. But he said he left quickly each time because he refused the American's invitation to have sex in exchange for money.

He said he never returned to the hotel and was surprised when he learned about Suretsky's death a few days later. He said he was even more shocked when police invited him for questioning around 7:30 p.m. Monday, while he was on duty at the restaurant.

SPO4 Rival earlier said Suretsky used to entertain male visitors in his room.

Suretsky's friend Rafael Guerrero told police he sensed something was wrong when the American failed to answer his calls on his mobile phone and on the hotel landline on Thursday.

It was not known if any money or other possession was stolen from Suretsky's room. His cell phone was missing when the police, Guerrero and representatives of the United States Embassy later searched his room.

READY to be proclaimed, Malonzo gives the thumbs-up sign at the Caloocan City hall. RANDY HORMILLOSA

Malonzo still waits

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

FOR THE second straight day, Caloocan City officer-in-charge Rey Malonzo and other winning candidates yesterday trooped to the Commission on Elections to be proclaimed, but they were still waiting as of late yesterday, watching the city board of canvassers complete the tally of the voting on May 14 and 15.

Ferdinand Rafanan, chair of the city board of canvassers (BOC) and director for the National Capital Region, sounded tentative when asked when the winners in the May 14 elections, from city mayor down to councilor, would be proclaimed.

"We'll see if we can have a partial proclamation today after we have listed the votes for each candidate based on the tally of the former BOC and after identifying the precincts whose election returns have not yet been canvassed," Rafanan said in an interview at 4 p.m. inside the packed Comelec session hall.

Rafanan said Malonzo was leading challenger Luis "Baby" Asistio Jr., a former congressman, by 31,180 votes based on the tally completed by the former BOC. But as of 4 p.m. yesterday, he said BOC has yet to canvass the election returns from 165 precincts. At 200 voters per precinct, the 165 precincts could yield a maximum of 33,000 more votes.

Rafanan, however, said the BOC also has to determine whether there were missing ERs in the 165 precincts as earlier reported. If some ERs are not produced, the BOC would summon the teachers and chair of the board of election inspectors to explain the missing precinct tally.

Rafanan said the BOC may then initially proclaim those candidates whose winning margins over their rivals are bigger than the uncanvassed votes.

"We will see if the uncanvassed precincts will still affect the results of the votes for each candidate, then we will proclaim them," Rafanan said.

Rafanan said Malonzo, winning vice mayor Tito Varela, and the top four councilors appeared to have big leads in the tally, while those below may still be affected by the uncanvassed votes.

An exasperated Malonzo, interviewed outside the Comelec session hall, said the canvassing of the remaining election returns was unneccesary since the total number of votes in the uncanvassed election returns, which he estimated at 25,600, would not affect his standing.

"Even if I get zero in these precincts, I would still be winning," Malonzo said.

"Obviously these are delaying tactics," he said. "Anyway we are used to delays because our proclamation has been delayed for almost three months already so it's alright if I'm not proclaimed today."

But Reynaldo Robles, lead counsel for Asistio, said the remaining uncanvassed votes would be material not only to the mayoral race but also to the tally for other positions, particularly in the second district where former councilor Edgar Erice was leading former Mayor Macario "Boy" Asistio in the congressional race by only 1,200 votes.

Malonzo called on the Comelec to proclaim the winners in Caloocan "so that peace will reign in the city." He also expressed concerns about his security, saying he is exposed to harm since he is not proclaimed yet.

"Caloocan is a highly politicized city where politicians are not allowed to get a good sleep by their political rivals," he said. "If this will be settled, there will be political stability in the city."

Asistio's lawyers also questioned the proceedings of the Caloocan City board of canvassers yesterday for being improper and premature in light of a petition for injunction they filed with the Supreme Court before the weekend.

Robles said the proclamation of the winners has no basis because of a standing resolution for the declaration of a general failure of elections in the city. He was referring to the resolution drafted by Comelec Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco which granted Asistio's petition.

Robles said Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo's order to dismiss Asistio's petition was inapppropriate and did not reverse the resolution penned by Tancangco.

"We filed a motion to defer the proceedings (of the Caloocan BOC) because this is already very confusing," he said.

Robles said the resolution penned by Tancangco was signed by all seven members of the commission en banc and was promulgated on Aug. 13. Benipayo and two commissioners dissented to Tancangco's resolution while three voted for it. The seventh commissioner voted for a partial declaration of failure of elections.

Robles said: "What are they trying to implement now, the summary of votes? That is not a decision. The dissenting opinion of the three commissioners? That is not a decision."

He said there is thus no basis for the BOC to reconvene since the Tancangco resolution has not been reversed or replaced by another resolution.

"The resolution stands and has not been set aside," he added. "The only way to dismiss the (Asistio) petition is through a resolution which has to contain an explicit discussion of the facts and the law upon which it is based."

He said the summary of votes and certification issued by Benipayo was not authorized under the Comelec rules and violated due process since it did not have a statement of facts and a dispositive portion. He said Benipayo "attempted to interpret the vote of every commissioner and came up with a conclusion."

"Why is it signed only by him and not by four commissioners as required by the rules? It's inappropriate," Robles said. "He's not a one-man Commission on Elections."

In his petition for injunction, Asistio asked the Supreme Court to issue a temporary restraining order on the proclamation and nullify the "summary of votes and certification" issued by Benipayo.

But Malonzo said Asistio should accept defeat and prepare instead for the 2004 election.

"There's still the 2004 election where they can again run," he said. "In politics, you cannot be prevented from trying and trying again."

Three-day weekend won't hurt –Gordon

TOURISM Secretary Richard J. Gordon yesterday said his proposal for a four-day work week for all government employees was not meant to prejudice government workers.

He only meant to promote local tourism, he said.

"We are not advocating a four-day work week all year round," Gordon stressed. "The proposed plan by the Department of Tourism is for government offices to give its workers three-day weekends only during summers.

"We also want to schedule national holidays so that these fall on Mondays or Fridays, thus giving workers and additional day off on the weekend."

He was reacting to media reports analyzing the impact of a permanent four-day workweek on the economy and the government bureaucracy.

Critics said the proposal might be viewed as an "undeserved reward" for government workers, who are perceived as inefficient and lazy.

"My intentions are good," Gordon said. "Employees should be given a break once in a while, no matter where they work, especially if such a strategy would encourage local tourism and cut down on overhead costs."

Gordon also said his plan should not prejudice casual employees who are paid by the day. Neither should it disrupt the work of government health care centers, schools, law enforcers and other work sectors requiring duty on most if not all days of the week.

"Naturally, implementing rules and regulations need to be set up before the plan can be put into action," Gordon said. "Such rules would exempt workers in exceptional situations, such as hospital personnel or police and fire department officers. They would also take into consideration the situation of casual employees."

A different payment scheme might be devised for casuals affected by the three-day weekend, he said.

Why the RP contingent is flying via Singapore to KL

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

(TRIUMPH & REMINDER: Immediately after the triumph of Django Bustamante in the World Pool Masters series in England, Puyat Sports Man Friday Mario Roxas, an esteemed friend, asked Ding Marcelo, Manila Bulletin sports editor, to tell me that Filipino billiards artists are not yet *laos* or over the hill, as they had appeared in a previous international championship. My sincerest thanks for the timely reminder, sir. Still, I'm in no mood to take back what I had written here about the failed stint of the RP Billiards team to the Cardiff World Championship series in July. Let's just hope Django's victory has reopened. the road to another set of great achievements by our players.... Mike Pangilinan, avid sports spectator based in Taytay, Rizal, writes in to remind Mobiline team decision-makers of an acute need to totally overhaul its coaching staff. Otherwise, Mike predicts, the Phone Pals campaign in the PBA would again be garbled, with no clear message.)

* * *

BEFORE they run their first race, throw their first punch or whatever, members of the Philippine delegation to the Southeast Asian Games will be put to a test.

Instead of heading straight to Kuala Lumpur, Filipino athletes and officials will be diverted to Singapore, where they will have to wait, together with their weighty luggage, for their next flight to the Malaysian capital.

It won't be a rush-rush refueling pause but a two-hour stopover.

Depending on the traveler, the lay-over at Changi in Singapore could either be a hassle or an unexpected bonus.

For first-timers, they could have time to shop and look around.

Sounds exciting?

* * *

No, it's a shame, cried the voice on the phone. Why would the Philippine government suddenly cancel all 300 airplane seats for the national delegation?

The affected carrier was the Malaysian Airline System, a national flag-carrier. As confirmed in two leading papers yesterday, some 300 seats earlier reserved in the airline for Filipino athletes and officials to the SEA Games have been transferred at the last minute to the rival Singapore Airlines.

What happened, I asked my nosy source, wasn't MAS supposed to have reserved an extra flight for the Filipino group?

Yes, but things started to sour up starting Friday.

What was the problem?

Nothing much, she explained. There were some hitches later topped by this request for upgrading that MAS could not accommodate.

Only that?

Well, it was a very important personage and his youngest son who were the main subject of the request.

Come on, I said, they could have offered some remedies. Is it true Malaysian Airlines executives became sort of rude?

* * *

Well, things just got out of hand, she explained. It seemed authorities could not afford to displease this very important person. That failure to upgrade could've broken the camel's back, so to say.

Why, who made the reservations for this VIP?

The travel agency commissioned by the Philippine Sports Commission, answered my source.

If this VIP is really that big and important, why couldn't he pay for his fare? Why couldn't his office make the reservations?

Maybe he's following a government order to cut down on expenses.

But, really, I asked, is canceling 300 seats that easy?

Well, not really, but what can we do? What's extra shameful is that they dumped Malaysian Airlines, which happens to be the flag-carrier of the Games host. *Walang delicadeza*. This is a slap in the face of the Games hosts.

OK, let's leave it at that. But, kindly tell me, what's this I heard that there were bids for as low as $330 and $340 for each passenger, but our sports authorities still awarded the deal to an agency which asked for $360 a seat?

I have the papers to show these lesser bids, my source exclaimed.

Maybe the winners offered a better plane?

What do you mean better, she said. It's the same Malaysian Airlines aircraft. Unfortunately, those who submitted the lower bids did not have the looks, the youth, not to mention the boobs!

Please, let's just stick to the facts of the case, we're on candid television. Let's not get carried away.

Sorry, she said, I just could not control my temper. They are a bunch of cheats.

* * *

OK, I continued, just tell me: Why can't this very important passenger be made to fly economy? It's just a short trip to KL anyway.

Well, he's not everybody's idea of an important passenger. He's really big, and I mean big.

Why?

He's actually a VIR.

What do you mean?

A Very Important Relative.

A relative of whom?

Of the moneybag at the PSC, who else?

CRUSHED ERIK ARAZAS

Vendors cleaned up after an Expedition van went out of control and plowed into their stalls in front of the Manila Cathedral on Monday. Three bystanders were brought to the hospital for treatment of injuries.

'I didn't . . .

(From page A19)

mother to kill her baby.

"It will be up to her lawyer to decide if she should see a doctor," Merino said.

Paniluan's aunt Francisca found the boy dead inside her home at 10:20 a.m. on Monday.

"The baby was on the bed, half covered with cloth," Francisca told the Inquirer Monday. "Dailyn sat on the floor and was staring at him. They were alone in the house."

The baby bore strangulation marks in the neck and his fists were clenched tight, police said.

"He must have really suffered before he died," Merino said.

"I don't know what led her to do it," Francisca said of Dailyn. "She did not hurt him before. She really loved Exequiel.

"The only thing I noticed was that she often stared at him quietly in recent days," she added.

Francisca said the baby was born out of an illicit relationship Dailyn had with her former employer in Pasay.

Police were still trying to find out if she was raped or if she consented to the relationship.

Francisca said she did not know the man's name or occupation. But she said he and Dailyn are both from San Miguel, Leyte, where Dailyn's parents also live.

Neighbors of the Paniluans told investigators that the man was married.

When Dailyn was nine months pregnant, her lover sent her away and she lived with her aunt.

The aunt said that on the fifth day of every month, Dailyn went to her son's father to ask for financial help.

"But he gave a small amount, enough only for the baby's milk and food," Francisca said. "He gave nothing for Dailyn." The man visited Dailyn last month, she added.

Girl home alone falls . . .

(From page A19)

He said none of the neighbors had known that something had happened to the girl since she was very quiet all the time she lay on the floor with a nail stuck in her head.

Authorities said the girl could have accidentally tripped and fell on the concrete floor.

The rescue team led by FO2 Melecio Orje Jr. and FO1 Nieva Bilaro provided first aid for the girl before bringing her to the Manila Central University Hospital in Caloocan.

No bail for shabu woman

By Alcuin Papa

A SUSPECTED woman shabu dealer arrested last year in Pasay City has not been allowed to post bail for her temporary release from jail.

In a four-page decision, Pasay City Regional Trial Court Judge Cesar Ylagan of Branch 231 ruled that Sandra Lim cannot post bail because the evidence against her is strong.

"Admission to bail is a matter of right only when there is no strong evidence of guilt of a person charged with a capital offense," Ylagan said in his decision.

Last Dec. 26, agents of the National Bureau of Investigation's Special Task Force raided Lim's unit at the Somerset Condominium in Leveriza, Pasay City and found a total of 246 kilos of shabu in the unit.

Before the raid, Geron de los Santos, a guard of the condominium, was also arrested for allegedly bringing drugs to Lim's unit.

While Lim was not in her unit during the raid, the NBI said it had been watching her and was certain that she was involved in the distribution of illegal drugs.

Lim was later arrested based on a warrant of arrest issued by Judge Ylagan.

In his decision to deny Lim bail, Ylagan gave credence to the argument of Pasay City prosecutor Bernabe Solis that Lim was indeed the owner of unit number 706 where the shabu was found. Lim had argued that she already sold the unit.

A prosecution witness had testified that the sale was a "sham."

Under the law, any person caught in possession or selling more than 200 grams of shabu would not be able to post bail and would suffer the death penalty once proven guilty.

13 Emmy nominations for NGC productions

THE NATIONAL Geographic Channel has been nominated for 13 Emmy awards in news and documentary categories. The popular magazine series, "Explorer," received more nominations (nine) than any other TV series, along with "Dateline NBC" and "60 Minutes II."

In addition, "The National Geographic Specials," airing on PBS, received two nominations, as did "The Urban Elephant." The news and documentary Emmys will be presented on Sept. 5 in New York.

The nominations in detail, per category: "Return of the Wolf" and "The Urban Elephant."

Background/Analysis of a Single Current Story, "The Pigeon Murders," a segment on "Explorer."

Individual Achievement in a Craft in News and Documentary Programming, the Director of "The Pigeon Murders," the Director of "The Flying Elephant," the Cinematographer of "Flying Devils," the Electronic Cameraperson of "Into the Volcano," the Film/Videotape Editor of "The Pigeon Murders," the Lighting Director of "Phantoms of the Night," the Graphic and Artistic Designers of "Fearsome Frogs," the Sound Designer of "Return of the Wolf," and the Music of "Flying Devils."

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Feedback

FROM Dr. **Juan L. Custodio Jr.** of Baclaran, MM: "I recently watched the film, 'Kiss the Sky' on Star Movies (Channel 23 on Destiny Cable) and found it viewable. Unlike the thin-as-clear-broth plot of "Redwood Curtain" starring **Lea Salonga**, this is an interesting love/sex triangle spiced up with Oriental (Buddhist) spirituality.

"Incidentally, 'Kiss the Sky' was filmed in the Philippines. **Evangeline Pascual** has a cameo role in it."

Very generously, Dr. Custodio appends a number of Boob-tube Booboos to his note. Enjoy:

Boob-tube booboos

SUSPECT who pointed a gun at his ex-girlfriend and her new lover: "You can have her with all my blessing. Why! I do not brag against myself!"

(You can brag about yourself, *pero 'pag* "against" yourself, *hindi na yata* bragging *ito*!)

* * *

Host of morning show: "*Makinig at manood sa aming* sports/fitness portion *para sa mga tanong sa inyong mga katanungan sa aming* fitness expert!"

(*Wala bang sagot sa aming kasagutan*?!)

* * *

Host of morning show, on irridalogy and kidney trouble: "*Ang pagkakaroon ng* infection *sa buto ay maaring sanhi ng* urinary tract infection!"

(*Ayos na ang buto-buto ng bato* (kidney)!)

Donna Cruz starrers on Viva Cinema

THIS MONTH, Viva Cinema has **Donna Cruz** as its special featured artist each Sunday night at 8. On Sept. 16, she fights against her greedy and powerful sister (Alice Dixson) in "Pangako ng Kahapon." The film also stars **Agot Isidro, Charito Solis, Gina Pareño** and **Robert Arevalo.**

On Sept. 23, Donna plays an aspiring singer who falls in love with her boydguard (**Bong Revilla**) in the film, "Pag-ibig Ko sa Iyo'y Totoo." Also featured are **Nanette Medved** and **Robert Arevalo.**

On Sept. 30, "Isang Tanong, Isang Sagot" has Donna falling in love with a man (**Jason Everly**) from a different world.

TV treats

SATURDAY, Sept. 8 at 8 a.m. on Viva Cinema, "Colegiala" with **Gloria Romero, Luis Gonzales, Barbara Perez, Tony Marzan** and **Panchito.**

At 8 p.m., "Asin at Paminta" with **Eddie Garcia, Rufa Mae Quinto** and **Patricia Javier.**

Tuesday, Sept. 11 at 8 p.m. on Star World, join an all-star cast of performers in "Party in the Park for the Princess Trust." **Ricky Martin** gives the show an energetic start, and he's followed by numbers by **Ronan Keating, Geri Haliwell, Emma Bunton, David Gray, Nelly Furtado,** Wheatus and **Sisqo.**

MTV VJ wannabes get their chance to be the next Donita or KC

YOU CAN be the next **Donita Rose, KC Montero** or **Belinda Panelo** and invade the exciting world of MTV.

Donita became an even bigger celebrity when she went to Singapore and worked as a video jock for MTV Asia. KC and Belinda made a name for themselves when they were chosen as Philippine-based MTV Asia VJs, during the VJ hunt conducted two years ago.

MTV Asia is giving VJ wannabes another chance by conducting the second VJ hunt.

Being an MTV Asia VJ means fame, since MTV is the pioneer music channel all over the region. Since the single "Video Killed the Radio Star" became the first MTV 20 years ago, music videos have become a big part of young life.

"MTV is represented by our VJs who personify the whole attitude of MTV," says **Rod Nepomuceno,** MTV Philippines marketing and communications director.

All VJ wannabes can display their hosting flair in several try-outs scheduled around the country.

The VJ hunt kicks off on Sept. 8 and 9 at SM Megamall, Sept. 15 at SM Cebu, Sept. 22 at Robinson's Place in Bacolod City, Sept. 29 at the Gaisano Mall in Davao City, Oct. 6 at SM Manila, Oct. 13 at Lim Ket Kai in Cagayan de Oro City.

MTV also accepts pictures, resumés and demo tapes which can be sent to MTV Philippines VJ Hunt 2001, P.O. Box 1696, Makati Central Post Office, 1256 Makati City. Deadline for submission of entries is Oct. 10.

Ten finalists will be chosen and will be presented in the final party on Nov. 24 in a Manila venue.

The winner will get a three-month contract, plus a round-trip ticket to Singapore to visit the MTV Asia studios.

MTV is Asia's favorite music channel, viewed by more young adults than any other music channel, according to the 1999 survey conducted by DMB&B Brainwaves New World Teen Study.

This was confirmed by AC Nielsen CabSat survey and the People Meter ratings in Indonesia.

MTV Philippines was launched on the UHF Channel 41 last February. It is now seen on non-cable TV 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

MTV now reaches 33 percent of the country's total population, whose main target audiences are those in the 16-24 age range.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

Tribute to Aaliyah

LATE Saturday morning, we stuck to Wave 89.1's tribute to pop R&B singer **Aaliyah,** who died Aug. 25 in a plane crash in the Bahamas.

The station did an hour-and-a-half, three-part homage to the two-time Grammy nominee and the show discussed her life, music and death. The tribute was replayed after originally airing Friday night.

The news about Aaliyah's death shocked the entertainment world since she was only 22. She went to the Bahamas to shoot the music video for "Rock the Boat," the new single to be released from her self-titled album. The record debuted at No. 2 on the Billboard charts after its release last July.

I'm not really a fan of Aaliyah, whose real name is **Aaliyah Dana Haughton,** but I am impressed by her achievements at a very young age.

I noticed her when she performed "Journey to the Past," the Oscar-nominated theme of "Anastasia," during the Academy Awards in 1998. It was said in the tribute that Aaliyah held the distinction of being the youngest artist ever to perform at the Oscars.

She displayed her musical inclination as early as 9 when she joined the nationwide Star Search in the United States. She didn't win. At 11, she worked as backup singer for her aunt **Gladys Knight** in a concert series in Las Vegas.

She was only 15 and a student at the Detroit School for Performing Arts when she met artist-composer-record producer **R. Kelly** in 1992. R. Kelly agreed to produce her album and later became her husband.

He sang a few lines in "Back and Forth," the first single released from Aaliyah's debut album, "Age Ain't Nothing But a Number." The song landed on the Top 5 hit on the R&B charts.

But the R. Kelly-Aaliyah marriage soon ended. After their divorce, Aaliyah collaborated with **Chris Cross** on her second album, "One in a Million," released in 1996.

She became an even bigger star when she made her movie debut opposite **Jet Li** in "Romeo Must Die." She also contributed four tunes to the movie soundtrack, including "Try Again," for which she won the MTV Video Music Awards 2000 for best female video.

Aaliyah is said to have paved the way for the entry into recording of other teenage artists such as **Monica, Lauryn Hill** and **Brandy.**

Aaliyah's death reminds us of other entertainers who also died in airplane accidents—**Richie Valens** of "La Bamba" fame, country singer **John Denver** and the members of the pop band Industry, who popularized the single "State of the Nation."

Calvin at Strumm's

YOU CAN catch **Calvin Millado** on all Wednesdays of September in the Joey's Rhythms series, this time at Strumm's on Jupiter Street in Makati City.

Calvin shares the stage with **Bituin Escalante** and Acoustic Jive on Sept. 5, 12, 19 and 26. Showtime is 9:30 p.m.

Calvin will also be in the repeat of "Rent," the rock musical, where he plays the lead male role of Roger. The musical had a successful run in Singapore.

"Rent" will be restaged by Atlantis Productions starting Oct. 5 at the GSIS Theater. For tickets, call 892-7078.

"Rent" tells the story of eight modern-day bohemians in search of love and inspiration in New York's East Village.

CALVIN Millado teams up with Rachel Alejandro in the repeat of "Rent."

The local staging of "Rent" is directed by **Bobby Garcia.** Also in the cast are **Rachel Alejandro, Michael de Mesa, Bituin Escalante, Lee Robin Salazar,** former Smokey Mountain member **Zhar, Joel Trinidad** and **Jake Macapagal.**

"Rent" in Manila also released a CD single, with **Martin Nievera** singing a pop remix version of "Seasons of Love."

Get a chance to date Jeremy Irons or visit Windsor Castle

SCOTCH original Chivas Regal celebrates its 200th birthday by launching an unparalleled global on-line auction and win a date with actor Jeremy Irons and a visit to Windsor Castle.

Or for those with a taste for fast cars and the ultimate thrill, get a chance to meet the Benetton F1 team.

You can also receive an original painting of Stevie Wonder by Ronnie Wood of the Rolling Stones.

Seagram's flagship brand Chivas Regal is undertaking a major global initiative to celebrate 200 years since the founding of Chivas Brothers. The core activity is Chivas 200, an unparalleled global on-line auction, hosted by e-Bay, the world's largest on-line trading community, to raise record-breaking amounts for over 100 charities around the world.

The 200-year-old tradition of excellence created by the Chivas Brothers is what has inspired the creation of Chivas 200 Global Auction.

The Chivas Brothers were pioneers of their time who raised the then-new art of blending to a new standard of subtlety and refinement by the careful combination of many different whiskies from all regions of Scotland, and most specially, Speyside.

The Chivas 200 Auction bidding commences Sept. 6 via www.chivas.com and runs through to the end of October. It will offer people around the globe the chance to vie for a selection of 200 lots which represent the world's most wanted adventures, unique experiences and items that money alone cannot buy.

A few of the aspirational lots that already have been confirmed include: perform live with the Moscow State Circus; stay in the world's exclusive Jules Under Sea Underwater Hotel; have a stylish wedding at Linn House, Scotland; a private recording session with trumpeter Wynton Marsalis and members of the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra.

Chivas Regal wants to share the 200th anniversary celebrations on a global scale, offering people the chance to bid for once in a lifetime experiences, while raising considerable amounts for major charities around the world.

Chivas Regal will partner with some of the world's most renowned charities, including The Rainforest Foundation, Make-A-Wish Foundation International, Care International, plus many more nationally based charities, including ABS-CBN Foundation in the Philippines.

The "Save the La Mesa Dam" project has been singled out to be Philippine beneficiary for the Chivas 200 project.

IRONS

New Hollywood heartthrob has Pinoy name and looks

(From page A24)

story of being discovered is a bittersweet episode that is just as dramatic.

One day a few years ago, the Los Angeles native and his parents were riding a Hollywood building elevator. As the doors closed, a hand reached in. It belonged to this man who wanted to get in the elevator. As the elevator went down, the man kept staring at then 18-year-old Jay until finally he said the classic tinseltown words, "You have a great look. Are you interested in acting or commercials?"

Jay did not consider the offer of Howard Tyner until two weeks later. Jay's mom asked him to call Howard and check what it was all about. At the meeting, Howard offered to pay for Jay's acting classes, head shots and audition trips. He could be paid later if Jay made it.

Make or break

It sounded like a good deal to Jay, who did not have a car, was attending a community college and seemed destined to follow his parents' working-class life.

The talent manager was able to land Jay in a few commercials and TV shows, including "Hang Time," a Saturday morning comedy where Jay appeared as Antonio Lopez, a basketball stud. When Howard read the script of "crazy/beautiful," he knew it was the make-or-break role for his talent. Although Jay was the first to audition for the role, and the producers thought he was perfect, they still searched all over US and Mexico, even as far away as Spain.

In the end, they came back to Jay. He displayed such star material in the daily rushes of "crazy/beautiful" that Disney executives worked out a three-movie deal with Howard for Jay.

But last June, as Howard was supposed to celebrate the launch of Jay's film career in a big way through the US release of "crazy/beautiful," he suffered a heart attack. He lay in coma for two weeks and then died.

"I'm still dealing with it," Jay says when asked how he is coping with the tragic development. "Howard was really the one who got me started in acting. We built a relationship over five years. We were very close, myself and him, my family and him, so when he passed away, it was really hard. He taught me so much, and showed me so much. I still feel like he's there watching over me."

Familiar plot

Howard would have enjoyed watching Jay gain critical attention in his role of a diligent Latino high school student and jock. "crazy/beautiful" has a plot familiar to moviegoers, especially Filipino ones: poor brown boy (Jay) meets rich white girl (Kirsten) but it serves an interesting 21st century twist. Rich girl's liberal politician dad objects, not because boy is poor but because the parent fears his delinquent daughter will destroy the boy's promising future.

Time magazine's Jess Cagle writes: "crazy/beautiful's most powerful appeal is likely to be the real erotic charge between Dunst and newcomer costar Jay Hernandez."

The 23-year-old Jay was nervous filming his first big film but to have to do his first sex scenes as well was daunting. He admits, "I was really nervous because I'd never done anything like that (on camera). And aside from that, it was with Kirsten Dunst, no less. Kirsten had done some kissing scenes but she had never done anything like this either. So we were both nervous but she was calm compared to me. She was cool and I was the one who was more nervous in the end."

Best kiss

Director John Stockwell was quoted as telling this anecdote on filming the sex scene neophytes: "At one point, she (Kirsten) just reached over and put his (Jay's) hand on her breast and said, 'You can touch them, they won't bite.'"

Howard predicted that Jay and Kirsten would win next year's MTV Movie Awards Best Kiss kudos for their passionate smooch in the film. Jay, who has appeared in MTV's late-night serial "Undressed," recalls: "Howard said, 'I bet you guys will be up for that next time.' Who knows?"

Jay, who says he went steady with a girl in high school for two years, is asked how he imagines the film's lovers will be 10 years after the movie's story ends.

"It really doesn't matter. It was about their experience. It was about their first love. It was about them coming together and being what they needed at the time. Beyond that, it doesn't really matter. What's really important was that time in their lives, the time they spent together.

"Everybody can remember that first love or a first experience like that, whoever it was in high school, or before or after that. But there is always that one person who is your first, your first experience of what love is."

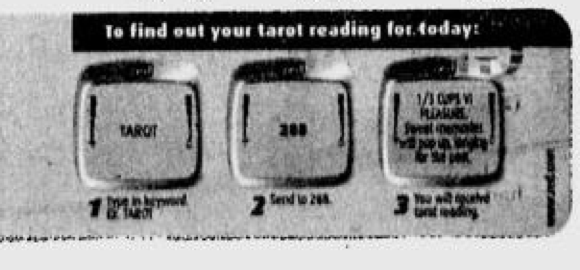
Knocking them down

As a result of his performance in "crazy/beautiful," Disney cast him opposite Dennis Quaid in "The Rookie," showing next year. He plays football in "crazy/beautiful," basketball in that morning TV sitcom (where he met his girlfriend, aspiring actress Daniella Deutscher) and baseball in this next film.

"I'm knocking them all down," he quips.

Despite the million-dollar movie deals, Jay still lives with his parents, a reflection of his close Latino family ties, very much like Filipinos.

"I'm gone a lot these days so when I come home, it's good to settle down and get away from everything and be with my family," he says. "It's my way of keeping myself on the ground."



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9	A.I.
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SM CITY FAIRVIEW
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SM CITY MANILA
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5	MOULIN ROUGE
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8	PAREHAS ANG LABAN
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10	PLANET OF THE APES
11	RUSH HOUR 2
12	CRAZY/ BEAUTIFUL

SM MEGAMALL
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2	CRAZY/ BEAUTIFUL
3	A.I.
4	RUSH HOUR 2
5	CROCODILE 2
6	A.I.
7	PAREHAS ANG LABAN
8	PLANET OF THE APES
9	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
10	SHREK
11	SCREAM... FRIDAY 13TH
12	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN

SM TUTUBAN
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4	CROCODILE 2

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2	A.I.
3	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
4	PAREHAS ANG LABAN
5	RUSH HOUR 2
6	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
7	PLANET OF THE APES
8	A.I.
9	CRAZY BEAUTIFUL
10	RUSH HOUR 2
11	SCREAM... FRIDAY 13TH
12	SHREK

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888

1	CROCODILE 2
2	SHREK
3	A.I.
4	RUSH HOUR 2
5	SCREAM... FRIDAY 13TH
6	SEX MEDUSA
7	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
8	A.I.
9	PLANET OF THE APES
10	PAREHAS ANG LABAN

SM GUADALUPE COMM'L
8820905

1	PAREHAS ANG LABAN
2	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
3	RUSH HOUR 2

SM CEBU
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1	SCREAM... FRIDAY 13TH
2	COMMAND & CONQUER
3	IRA
4	ANIMAL
5	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
6	A.I.
7	SHREK

SM ILOILO
3209422

1	IRA
2	CLOSED
3	BROTHERHOOD
4	ANIMAL
5	A.I.
6	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
7	CLOSED
8	COMMAND & CONQUER

SM PAMPANGA
7128015

1	RUSH HOUR 2
2	BROTHERHOOD
3	A.I.
4	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
5	SEX MEDUSA
6	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN

SM SUCAT
8204075

1	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
2	RUSH HOUR 2
3	A KNIGHT'S TALE
4	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN

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2	RUSH HOUR 2
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4	A KNIGHT'S TALE (Sneak Preview)

GLORIETTA 4

1	SHREK in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
2	A KNIGHT'S TALE (Sneak Preview) in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3	RUSH HOUR 2 THX in DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4	PLANET OF THE APES Art Film in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
6	RUSH HOUR 2 in DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
7	XIU XIU: THE SENT DOWN GIRL (Phil. Premiere) in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

GREENBELT

1	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
2	RUSH HOUR 2 in SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND
3	A KNIGHT'S TALE (Sneak Preview) in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
4	MARTIN NIEVERA LIVE! SEPT. 16, 21 & 22 - 9PM Onstage

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

1	RUSH HOUR 2 THX in DSD/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
2	RUSH HOUR 2 in DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3	SHREK in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5	A KNIGHT'S TALE (Sneak Preview) in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

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MOVIE GUIDE

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2 (SDDS)	RUSH HOUR 2
3 (DTS)	A.I.
4 GOLD (DTS)	A.I.
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	A.I.
6 GOLD (SDDS)	SHREK
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	RUSH HOUR 2
8 [illegible]	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
9 [illegible]	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
10 [illegible]	PAREHAS ANG LABAN

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	
2	
3 (DTS)	
4	
5	
6 (DTS)	
Golden Pearl THX	

Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3
(Kalaw) tel 536.4315

1 (DOLBY)	RUSH HOUR 2
2 (DTS)	A.I.
3	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 831.6603

1	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
2	A.I.
3	PAREHAS ANG LABAN

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4985

1	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
2	RUSH HOUR 2
3	CROCODILE
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	A.I.
5	PAREHAS ANG LABAN

Metropolis
(Alabang) tel 543.4001

1	RUSH HOUR 2
2	
3	PAREHAS ANG LABAN
4	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
5	CROCODILE
6	A.I.
7	RESERVE
8	RESERVE

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) Tel. 7053152 - 56

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

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2	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC.
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1	
2	
3	

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	
A	

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	A.I.
2	PAREHAS ANG LABAN
3	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
4	RESERVE

GOTESCO CINEMA

City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (DOLBY)	RUSH HOUR 2
2	RESERVE
3	RESERVE
4	PAREHAS ANG LABAN
5	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
6	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
7 (DTS)	A.I.
8 (SDDS)	A.I.
9 (DOLBY)	CROCODILE

Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	PAREHAS ANG LABAN

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
2	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
3	PAREHAS ANG LABAN
4 (SDDS)	A.I.
5	CROCODILE 2
6 (DOLBY)	RUSH HOUR 2
7 (DTS)	A.I.
8	RESERVE
9	RESERVE

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	A.I.
2	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
3	RUSH HOUR 2
4	CROCODILE 2
5 (SDDS)	PAREHAS ANG LABAN
6	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
7 (DOLBY)	A.I.
8	RESERVE

Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
2	PAREHAS ANG LABAN
3 (DTS)	A.I.
4	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
5 (SDDS)	RUSH HOUR 2

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	PAREHAS ANG LABAN

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	PAREHAS ANG LABAN

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

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Lords	RED DIARIES
Jennet	RESERVE

THE MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	RUSH HOUR 2
2	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
3	RESERVE
4	A.I.

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

3	PAREHAS ANG LABAN

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	A.I.
2	RUSH HOUR 2
3	CROCODILE 2
4	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
5	PAREHAS ANG LABAN

New Divisoria Mall
DIVISORIA CINEMA
tel 244.4619

1	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
2	RUSH HOUR 2
3	PAREHAS ANG LABAN
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6	A.I.

Baclaran LRT
LRT CINEMA
tel 512.0115

1 (DOLBY)	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
2	PAREHAS ANG LABAN
3	RESERVE

Berma
tel 879-2029 or 30

1	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
2	PAREHAS ANG LABAN

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	CROCODILE 2
2	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
3	
4	

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	RUSH HOUR 2
2	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
3 (DTS)	A.I.

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	CRAZY/ BEAUTIFUL
2 (DTS)	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
3 (DOLBY)	A.I.
4	RUSH HOUR 2

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) Tel. (049) 411-1146

1	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
2 (DOLBY)	RUSH HOUR 2
3 (DTS)	A.I.
4	CRAZY/ BEAUTIFUL

Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	CATS & DOGS
2	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SOON TO OPEN

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	CROCODILE 2
2	PAREHAS ANG LABAN
3	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
4 (DTS)	A.I.

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	RUSH HOUR 2
2	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
3 (DTS)	A.I.
4	CRAZY / BEAUTIFUL
5	SEX MEDUSA

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
2	A.I.
3	RUSH HOUR 2

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101

1	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
2	RUSH HOUR 2
3	BROTHERHOOD

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	SHREK
2	BAKIT DI TOTOHANINN
3	PARU PARONG LIGAW

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
2	A.I.
3	BROTHERHOOD

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
2 (DTS)	

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	SCREAM... FRIDAY THE 13TH
2	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
3	HUWAD NA HAYOP

Fiesta World Mall
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1	DUDURUGIN KO . . .
2	A.I.
3	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
4	SHREK

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	TEENAGE DIARY
2	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
3	BROTHERHOOD
4 (DTS EX)	RUSH HOUR 2

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2	A.I.
3	CROCODILE 2
4	SHREK
5	RUSH HOUR 2
6	RUSH HOUR 2
7	MOULIN ROUGE
8	CRAZY/BEAUTIFUL
9	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
10	A.I.

ERMITA
536-7809 TO 12

1	RUSH HOUIR 2
2	A.I.
3	SHREK
4	RUSH HOUR 2
5	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
6	CROCODILE 2
7	A.I.

NOVALICHES
935-3229 to 31

1	RESERVED
2	SHREK
3	RESERVED
4	SHREK
5	RUSH HOUR 2
6	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
7	A.I.
8	CROCODILE 2

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2	CROCODILE 2
3	SHREK
4	A.I.
5	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
6	PAREHAS ANG LABAN

BACOLOD
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3	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
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5	ANIMAL
6	VENUS

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THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	RADYO
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	RUSH HOUR 2
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	PLANET OF THE APES
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	SHREK
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	TEENAGE SEDUCTION
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	BROTHERHOOD
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	SEX EDUCATION
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	RUSH HOUR 2
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	KASIBULAN/ TURN ON
ODEON	ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
ODEON-2	RUSH HOUR 2
ROBEN	PAREHAS ANG LABAN
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	WOMAN ON TOP/ VALENTINE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	TOMB RAIDERS / GET CARTER
QUEZON-1	ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
REMAR	ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
REMAR-2	PAREHAS ANG LABAN
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
B	PAREHAS ANG LABAN
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	PLANET OF THE APES
CINEMA-2	JAPAN ANIME' FILM FESTIVAL
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
CINEMA-2	PAREHAS ANG LABAN
CINEMA-3	RUSH HOUR 2
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	A.I.
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	PLANET OF THE APES
CINEMA-6	SEX EDUCATION
CINEMA-7	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
CINEMA-8	KISS OF THE DRAGON
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	A.I.
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	RUSH HOUR 2
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	A.I.
CINEMA-12	CROCODILE 2
CINEMA-14	SHREK
CINEMA-15	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
CINEMA-2	ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
CINEMA-3	ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
CINEMA-4	SHREK
CINEMA-5	MOULIN ROUGE
CINEMA-6	ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	RESERVE
CINEMA-2	RESERVE
CINEMA-4	RESERVE
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	NAKALIMOT SA PAG-IBIG
CINEMA-2	EVANGELINE KATORSE
CINEMA-4	OUTRAGE

KYLA wins for her video "Hanggang Ngayon."

Viewers choice award

KYLA bags the MTV 2001 Video Music Awards trophy as the Southeast Asia viewers choice for her video, "Hanggang Ngayon."

The MTV Video Music Awards will premiere on MTV Philippines (UHF Channel 41) on Sept. 7, 10 p.m.

Viewers will be able to catch repeats of the show on MTV Philippines on Sept. 8 and 16, 1 p.m., and Sept. 9 at 8 p.m.

MTV Philippines will also air the MTV Video Music Awards uncensored on Sept. 8 and 15, 8 p.m. and Sept. 9, 1 p.m.

Kyla's music video, "Hanggang Ngayon," bested entries from Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand for the regional award.

The winner was determined by votes gathered around the region. Viewers submitted their votes by way of voting slips, snail mail and logging on www.mtv-asia.com.

According to Peter Bullard, senior vice president and managing director of MTV Southeast Asia, Kyla will be the region's representative to the 2001 MTV Video Music Awards to be held in New York this month.

"Kyla's win is a reflection of the choice of the viewers in the region and is testament to MTV's support of artists on both local and global platforms," says Bullard.

"With Kyla's victory, highlights of 'Hanggang Ngayon' will now be showcased on a global platform via the 2001 MTV Video Music Awards."

Sponsors of the 2001 MTV Video Music Awards in Asia are Nescafé, Sanyo Electric Trading Company Ltd. and Suzuki Motor Corporation.

Benefit concert for kids with cancer

THE CANCER Warriors Foundation will hold a concert on Sept. 9, 7 p.m. at the AFP Theater in Camp Aguinaldo on EDSA, Cubao. This is to raise funds for children with cancer.

Performers will be the Bukas Palad, Hangad, DLSU Chorale, UE Choir, Assumption High School Glee Club and the Foundation's church group, Psalm Ensemble.

For ticket prices, call James Auste at 833-0059 or e-mail him at jauste@pacific.net.ph.

For more details, call the production manager at 813-5940.

Icebox holds farewell concert before six-month Japan stint

TEEJAY Concepts Inc. and Mindave Entertainment Corp. invite the public to an unforgettable musical experience, the "Icebox Special Farewell Concert," Sept. 6 at the 510-seater Padi's Mindave Restaurant Bar in Mindanao Avenue, Quezon City.

Exciting prizes and games will also be given patrons the whole night.

The group will embark on a six-month stint in Japan, where Icebox lead guitarist Willy "Red" Gonzales won the best guitar player award in the 1984 Tokyo Music Festival.

The band's original song, "Edna," was also nominated as best novelty recording in the 14th Awit Awards.

Although starting with heavy metal and rock, Icebox made the successful transition to pop music and has since written great love songs.

Members of the band are dynamic young musicians Red Gonzales, Ganni Valenzuela, Roland Duque, Jun Tutor, Kerr Nuñez, Spayk Cuizon and Ro Reyes.

The band's debut album under Infiniti Music and distributed by BMG Records, contains 11 original love songs.

Mindave Entertainment Corp. also announces the winners in the Sept. 2 singing competition.

First prize went to 15-year-old high school student Kevin Scott Almario, while second prize winner was 23-year-old Malate Catholic School teacher Aries Mar Phoenix Relota.

The Mindave Battle of the Bands will also start this month.

For reservations, call 453-0080, 414-4930 to 34 or 925-3117.

The three-story Padi's Mindave Restaurant Bar owned by Wilson Lee Flores, hopes to help discover new young talents in music, literature, painting, sculpture and other arts. It has the Mindave Art Gallery and will soon open a small bookshop selling 80 popular kinds of magazines.

POWER PLANT
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BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN - GP 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50	ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE - P 13 11:50, 2:40, 5:30, 8:20	ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE - P 13 12:40, 3:30, 6:20, 9:10
SHREK - GP 12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:00, 10:00	MOULIN ROUGE - P 13 11:50, 2:20, 4:50, 7:20, 9:50	ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE - P 13 1:30, 4:20, 7:00, 10:00

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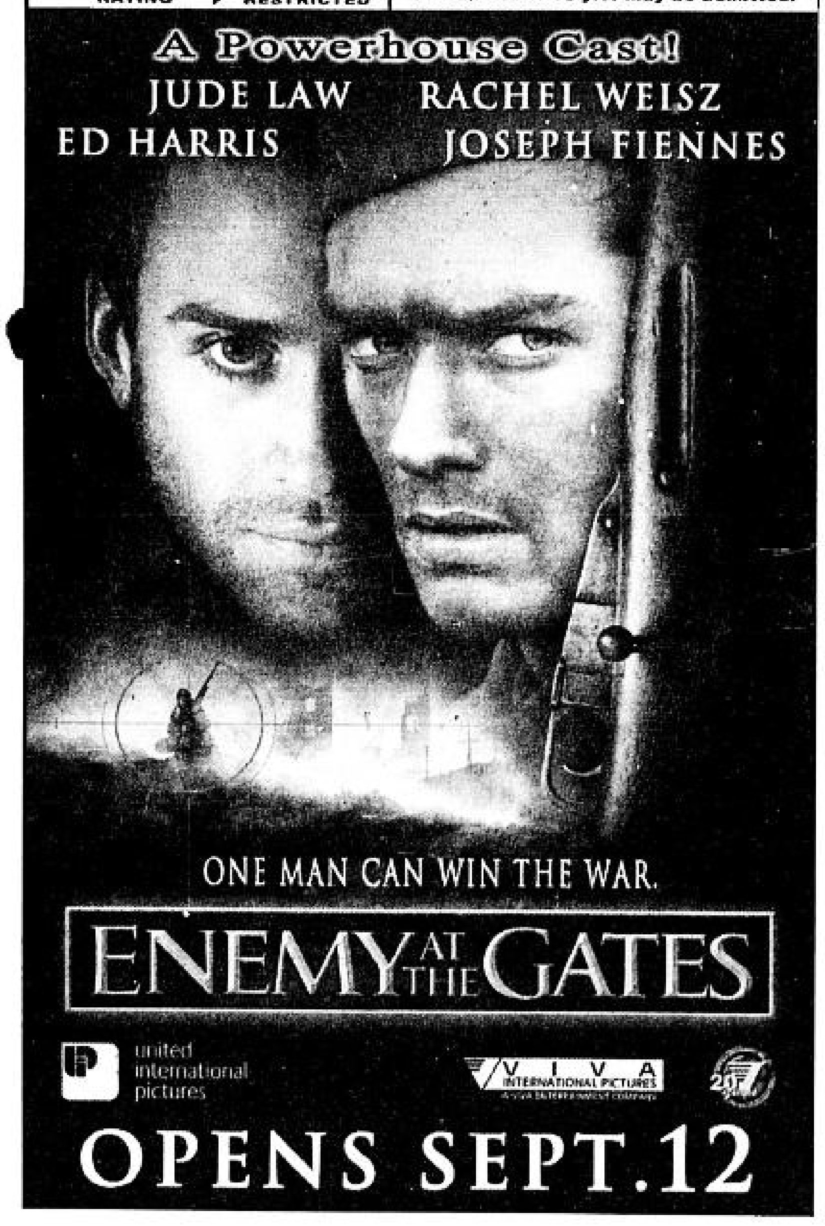

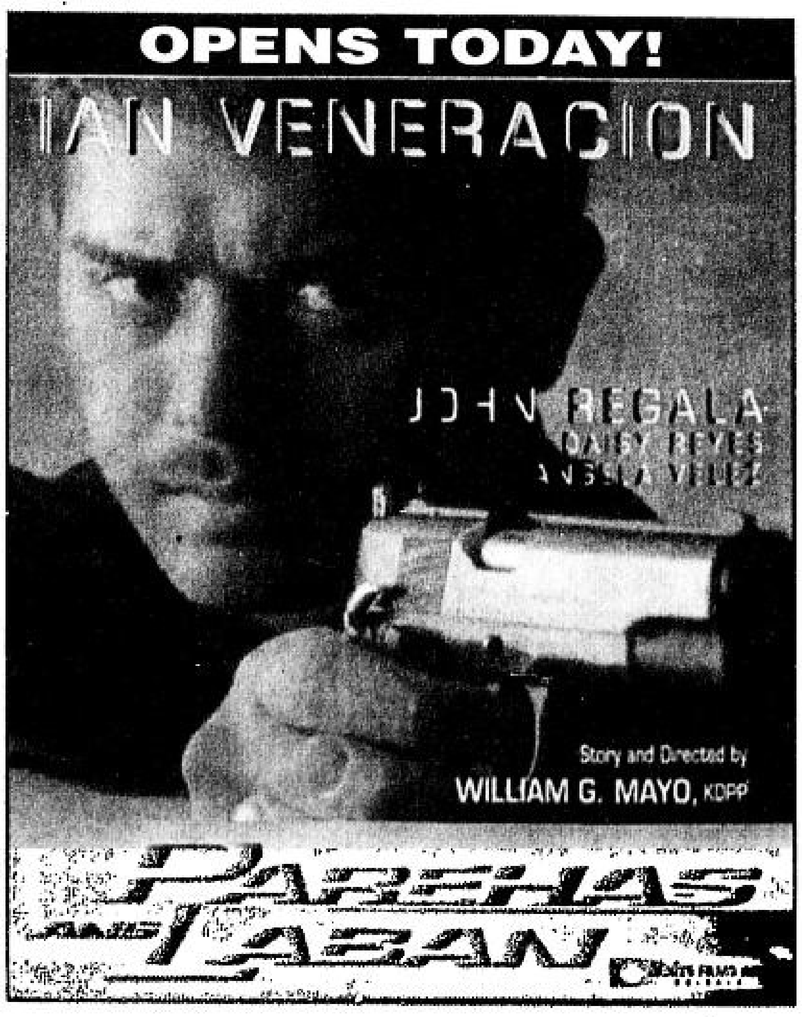

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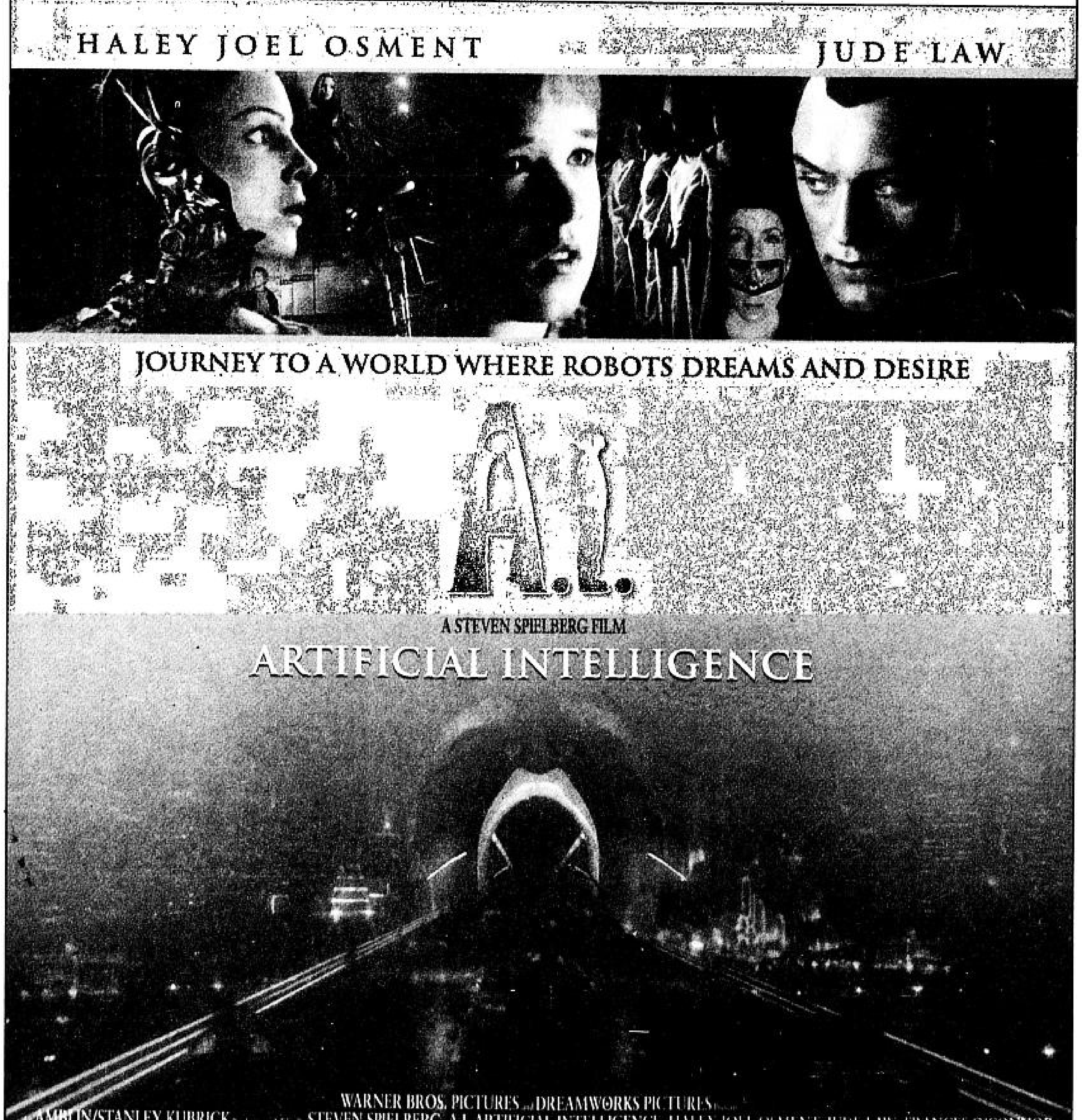

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BRENDAN GLEESON and WILLIAM HURT Robot Characters Designed by STAN WINSTON STUDIO Special Visual Effects & Animation by INDUSTRIAL LIGHT & MAGIC
Costume Designer BOB RINGWOOD Sentient Machine Therapist JEANINE SALLA Music by JOHN WILLIAMS Film Editor MICHAEL KAHN, A.C.E. Production Designer RICK CARTER
Director of Photography JANUSZ KAMINSKI, A.S.C. Executive Producers JAN HARLAN WALTER F. PARKES Screenplay by STEVEN SPIELBERG Screen Story by IAN WATSON
Based on the Short Story by BRIAN ALDISS Produced by KATHLEEN KENNEDY STEVEN SPIELBERG BONNIE CURTIS
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ENTERTAINMENT
LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

New Hollywood heartthrob has Pinoy name and looks

By Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—With a Filipino-sounding name and handsome Pinoy mestizo looks, has new Hollywood heartthrob Jay Hernandez been mistaken for a Filipino?

"At times, yes," answers the actor whose performance in the acclaimed love story "crazy/beautiful" has been earning a good buzz, remarkable for a first-timer in the movies.

"Sometimes people ask if I have a mixed heritage (Filipino-Mexican)," says the third-generation Mexican-American. "I grew up around a lot of Asians, Filipinos, Chinese and Japanese. I have a lot of Filipino friends. In fact, the high school I went to has mostly Latino and Filipino students."

HERNANDEZ

In this one-on-one interview at the Four Seasons, Jay is wearing a short-sleeved blue shirt and jeans. His left ear is pierced ("I did a photo shoot yesterday and they didn't want the earrings so I took them out and left them out") and a tattoo circles his right arm (an 18th birthday gift to himself).

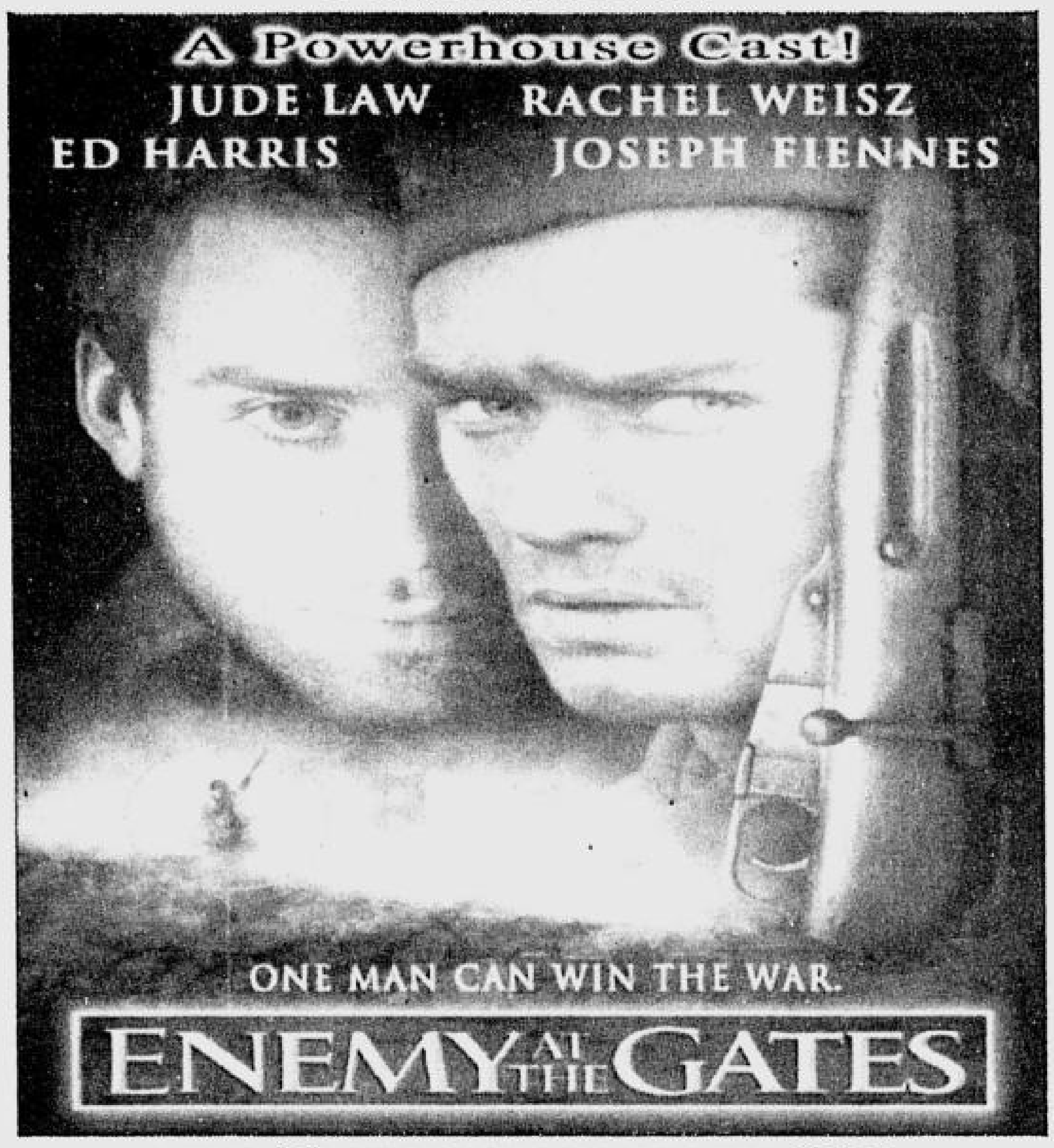
He often breaks into a smile that lights up his brown face, which is distinguished by thick eyebrows and big, expressive brown eyes. It is a dazzling smile often cited by critics who have heaped praises on him and costar Kirsten Dunst.

Masking a sadness

Los Angeles Times film critic Kenneth Turan's appraisal of Jay's performance in "crazy/beautiful" is typical: "This is Jay Hernandez's feature debut, but he seems unfazed by his beginner's status. Behind a great smile is both an appealing gravity and that rarest of qualities, charismatic decency."

These days, Jay's smiles mask a sadness that he is feeling at a time when he should be in a 100 percent party mood. Following his so-Hollywood

NEW/ A21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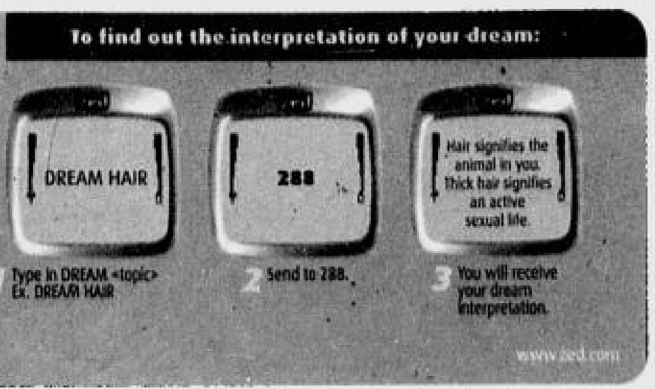
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BUSINESS

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Exports show signs of bottoming out

By Doris C. Dumlao

PHILIPPINE exports in July shrank nearly 20 percent year-on-year, but economists said the figure was unlikely to deteriorate in the coming months.

The country's exports have been declining since January this year mainly because of the slowdown in the economies of Japan and the United States. But analysts said the worst could now be over.

However, there was also no sign of a quick rebound and exports could continue at current levels, they added.

The National Statistics Office (NSO) said exports in the January-July period totaled $18.58 billion, down 10.8 percent from $20.84 billion in the same 2000 period.

In July alone, exports amounted to $2.59 billion, down 19.4 percent from $3.22 billion in July last year.

But they were marginally up from $2.58 billion in June 2001 and appeared to have bottomed out, analysts said.

"The export figures are hovering in a comfortable zone at the moment," said Abacus Securities economist Emilio Neri. "It's ranging from $2.5-$2.6 billion, which on an absolute level will keep the trade position for the year near balance."

In June, exports dropped almost 25 percent year-on-year, the worst decline in 20 years.

"I expected it to be negative but not as much as the 25-percent (drop) we saw in June," Luz Lorenzo, an economist with ATR Kim Eng Securities, said of the July figures. "It seems exports have bottomed out in June."

But it seems highly unlikely the government would attain its target of keeping exports for the year pegged at the 2000 level of $38.1 billion.

Besides the slowdown in the United States and Japan, the Philippines has been hard hit by the global slump in demand for computers and electronic hardware. Usually, about half of the country's exports are electronics components.

Earnings from electronic components fell by 36.6 percent to $1.18 billion but the sector remained the biggest dollar earner, accounting for 45.6 percent of total export receipts.

Merrill Lynch economist Jojo Gonzales forecast exports would contract by at least 12 percent this year with no signs of recovery in global demand for electronics.

Gonzales said that based on estimates, the soonest a recovery would occur in the United States was yearend "and it takes one or two quarters before it translates to improved exports in countries like the Philippines and the rest of Asia."

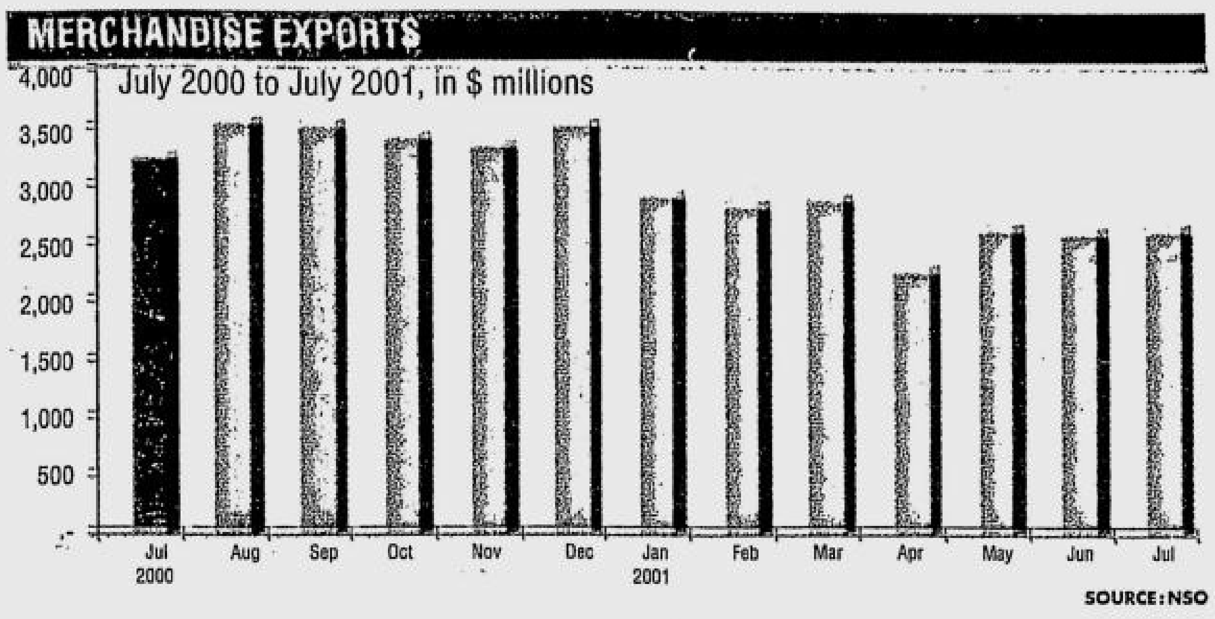
"A large portion of these exports go to the United States and the US has yet to see a recovery," said Leslie Khoo, an economist at the International Financing Review, adding he expected export figures to be soft at least until the end of the year.

Components exports amounted to $1.18 billion in July, or about 45 percent of all shipments, the NSO said. The figure was down 36.57 percent from July 2000 and down 13.8 percent from June.

The United States continued to be the top market with a 29.8-percent share of all exports in July, followed by Japan with 16.5 percent and the Netherlands with 7.1 percent.

Aside from electronics and garments, the country's other top exports were ignition wiring set and other wiring sets used in vehicles, aircraft and ships; products manufactured from materials imported on consignments basis; woodcraft and furniture; metal components; coconut oil; cathodes and sections of cathodes; refined copper; petroleum products, and fresh bananas. *With* INQUIRER *wire reports*

MERCHANDISE EXPORTS

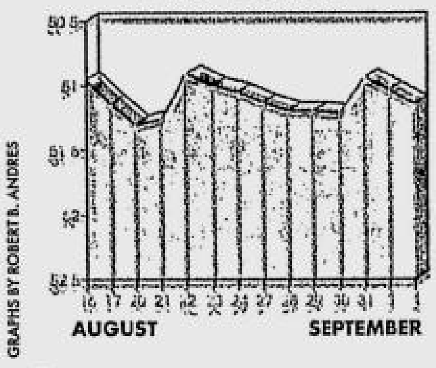


SOURCE: NSO

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



Peso-Dollar Rate

P 51.15 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Sept. 4, 2001

¥ 119.36 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Sept. 4, 2001

GOLD:$272.50/273.00
per ounce Hong Kong, Sept. 4, 2001

Sept. 3, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.096611	1.000000	51.0050
Japan	Yen	0.009233	0.008420	0.4295
United Kingdom	Pound	1.594254	1.453800	74.1511
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.140599	0.128212	6.5395
Switzerland	Franc	0.659616	0.601504	30.6797
Canada	Dollar	0.706944	0.644662	32.8810
Singapore	Dollar	0.630237	0.574713	29.3132
Australia	Dollar	0.578565	0.527593	26.9099
Bahrain	Dinar	2.908938	2.652661	135.2990
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.293212	0.267380	13.6377
Brunei	Dollar	0.626027	0.570874	29.1174
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000124	0.000113	0.0058
Thailand	Baht	0.024894	0.022701	1.1579
UAE	Dirham	0.298641	0.272331	13.8902
Korea	Won	0.000861	0.000785	0.0400
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.911900	46.5115
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.466247	23.7809
France	Franc	0.152450	0.139018	7.0906
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.413802	21.1060
Austria	Schilling	0.072672	0.066270	3.3801
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.022605	1.1530
Italy	Lire	0.000517	0.000471	0.0240
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.153371	7.8227
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004549	0.2320
Spain	Peseta	0.006011	0.005481	0.2796
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.022605	1.1530
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.157874	59.0574

STOCK MARKET

Shares fall to 10-mo low

SHARES fell 0.1 percent to a 10-month low yesterday amid political wranglings and an absence of good news, analysts said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index dropped 1.03 points to 1,252.58, its lowest level since closing at 1,251.23 on October 20 last year.

"It seems like there's no news to perk up the market. Investors continue to shy away given the low value turnout," said Astro del Castillo of A and A Securities Inc.

"The continued wrangling among lawmakers is really turning off investors," Del Castillo added, referring to a prolonged probe into allegations that one opposition senator may be involved in criminal activities.

"Instead of focusing on the economic agenda, it's taking a backseat," he said.

"We're looking at lower levels for the coming days," said Manny Cruz of Mark Securities Corp.

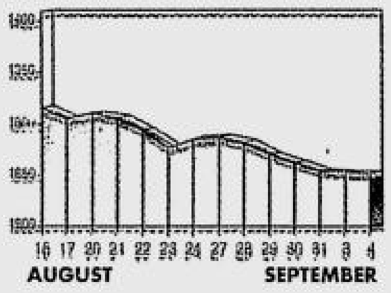
"The reasons for this are the weakness in the export sector and continued political squabbles," he added.

Volume rose to 210 million shares worth P359 million from 90.931 million shares worth P226.55 million on Monday. They added that some technical-led buying in key stocks helped keep the main index above the key 1,250-point psychological support level by the close after an intra-day fall to 1,242.55.

The 1,250-point closing level has not been breached since Oct. 7, 1998.

"We tested the low of October last year before some technical led buying emerged in the last 30 minutes," KGI Securities sales head Fitz Aclan said. *AFP, Reuters*

PSE Composite Index



(See stock market report on Page B4)

PNB cuts costs, hikes deposits

PHILIPPINE National Bank's radical shift in ideology based on efficiency and economy is starting to pay off, its president said yesterday.

Since the Lucio Tan group took over the helm of PNB in 2000, bank president Feliciano Miranda said it began accomplishing more using less resources.

Miranda said the first order of business was the reduction of big-ticket expense items beginning with directors and officers' compensation, termination of various consultancy agreements and employee-sizing programs.

For the first seven months of 2001, Miranda reported that compensation expense was reduced by P134 million; repairs and maintenance by P28 million; stationery and supplies by P13 million; postage, telephone and cable reduced by P17 million, and travel costs slashed by P12 million.

Miranda stressed that rationalizing operating costs was just one of the strategies being pursued by management. He said aggressive loan collection efforts and deposit generation continued to be the primary thrusts of PNB.

He said proof of the growing confidence in the bank's management was the increase in deposits to P130 billion for the first seven months of 2001 from P119 billion at the end of year 2000.

He added that in less than a year since Tan took over PNB, the taipan infused an additional capital of P20.3 billion. This fresh capital, together with certain terms of the proposed rehabilitation plan for PNB, would enable the bank to meet the strict capital adequacy requirements imposed by the Bangko Sentral, he said.

Miranda added that PNB's current management was working double time to cleanse the bank's non-performing loans and real and other properties owned and acquired (Ropoa). He said Ropoa sales have increased to a record P1.3 billion in the first seven months of 2001.

Inflation seen at 6.8% in August

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday projected a stable inflation rate for August that would allow the policy-making Monetary Board to keep its overnight rates and reserve requirement on banks unchanged.

A continued peso weakness plus the lag effect of higher oil prices in the previous months were seen to keep inflation in August at 6.8 percent, according to the central bank.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura yesterday said the central bank's research department had projected a range of 6.7 to 6.8 percent for the inflation rate last month.

"The weaker peso and higher oil prices was offset by the good performance of the agriculture sector," the central bank governor said. The central bank forecast was slightly higher than the 6.7-percent projection of Economic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas.

Buenaventura said that if inflation stayed within target, the policy-making Monetary Board would simply keep its overnight rates and reserve requirement on banks unchanged.

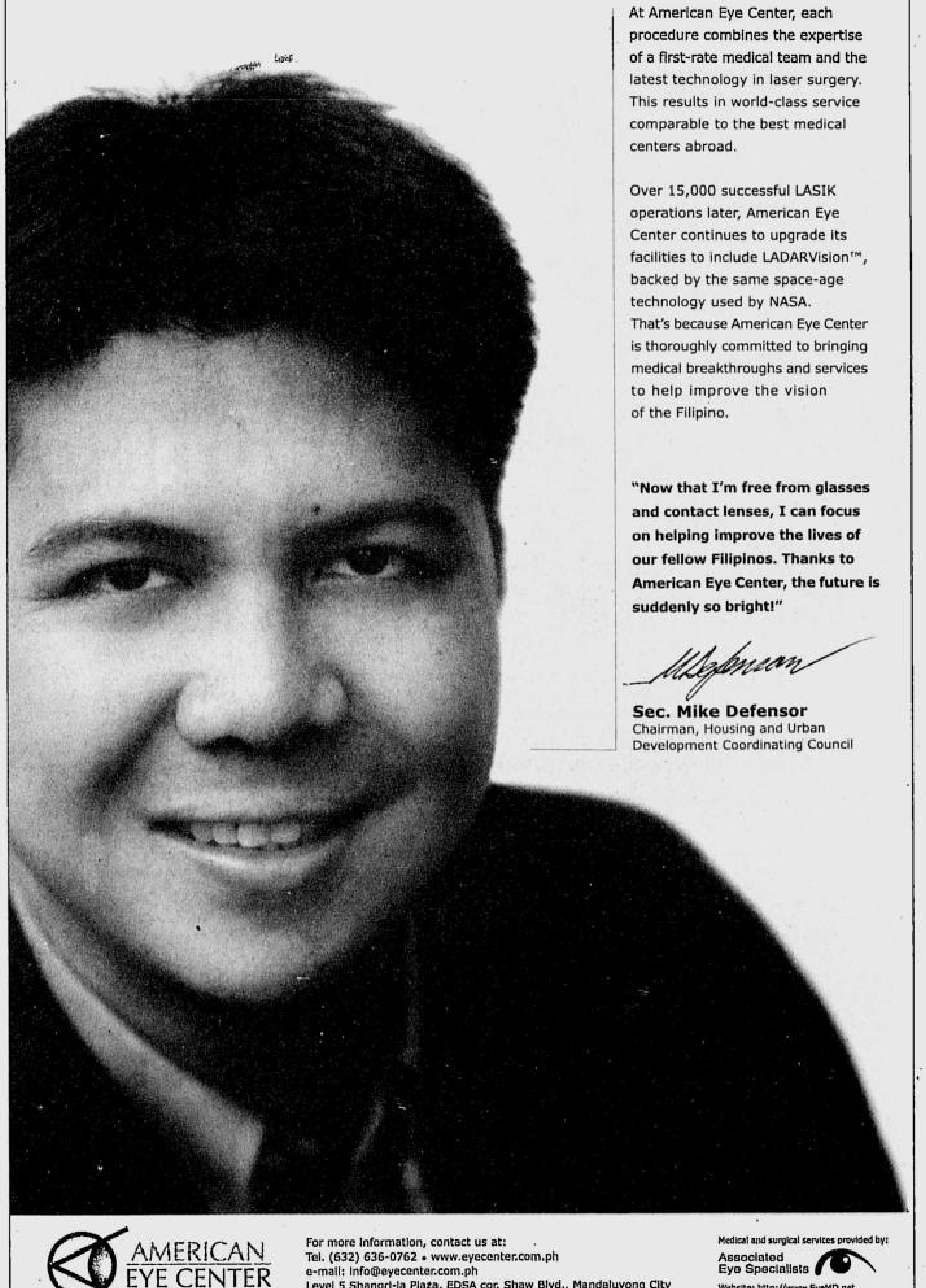
The central bank's overnight rates on borrowing and lending stand at 9 percent and 11.25 percent, while the mandated reserve is at 20 percent.

"There is still a chance for us to cut rates before yearend. The more important factor is for inflation to go down. A cut from the US Fed always helps," he noted.

A ranking BSP official explained that based on his observation of trends, the inflation rate should start to taper off significantly toward the fourth quarter.

By October, the negative impact of the peso weakness from late June to August would have disappeared together with the lag impact of higher oil prices in July.

A weaker currency tends to be inflationary as more pesos are released into the system to pay for an expensive dollar.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Credit card loans rising

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

CREDIT card loans extended by the country's 45 commercial banks and more than 100 thrift banks increased by 6 percent to P34.5 billion in the first quarter this year from last year's level.

Of the total amount, P5.1 billion became past due in March, up 5 percent from the past due level of P4.9 billion in the previous quarter, data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showed.

The past due amount represents 22.7 percent of the banking sector's entire exposure in the credit card market .

The BSP noted that of the P34.5 billion credit card exposure of the banking industry, commercial banks and their subsidiaries accounted for P33.7 billion or 97.6 percent of the pie. This was 6-percent higher than the year-ago level and 2.7-percent up from the fourth quarter of last year.

Foreign commercial banks, in particular, accounted for 43.86 percent of the total credit card receivables. Among the more aggressive credit card issuing banks are Citibank NA, Standard Chartered Bank, and HSBC.

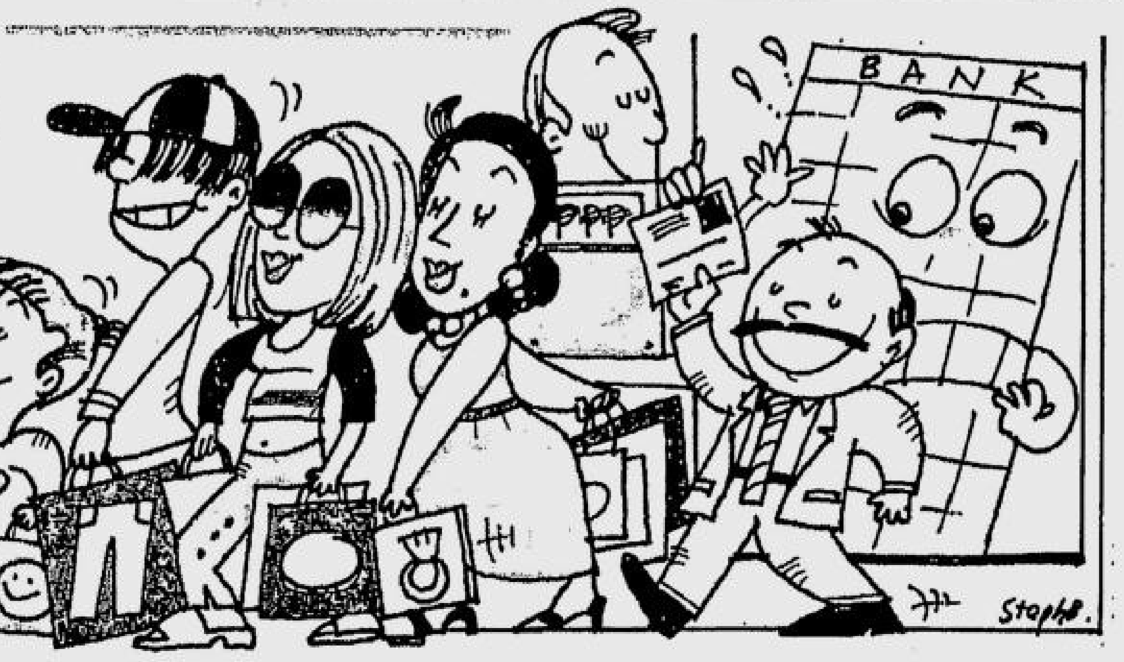
In a related development, the bad loans ratio of the country's commercial banks swelled to 16.96 percent of their total loan portfolio in June from 16.81 percent in the previous month as the volume of bad loans soared while the banks' loan portfolio shrunk.

In June, the level of NPLs rose by P2.1 billion or 0.8 percent to P267.06 billion while the sector's total loan portfolio slid by P879 million or by 0.1 percent from P1.576 trillion in May.

Bank analysts said that the economic recovery that the banking sector was counting on to boost credit growth has yet to take place.

Thus, an increasing number of borrowers were finding it difficult to settle their maturing debts. The lack of economic activities resulted in low borrowings.

Without new loans to offset a rising level of soured loans resulted in the worsening of the banks' NPL ration.



Congress says no to pleas for punitive duty on cement

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

LAWMAKERS are poised to recommend to the Department of Trade and Industry the rejection of the Philippine Cement Manufacturers Corp.'s petition seeking the imposition of punitive duties and quantitative restrictions on cement imports.

House Committee on Trade and Industry senior vice chair Jose Ma. Sarte Salceda said this was the emerging consensus among committee members because the foreign-controlled cement manufacturers could not prove that their financial losses and labor retrenchment were caused by the import surge.

Salceda said that the Safeguard Measures Act required petitioners to establish that their injuries such as loss in market share and profits were caused by the imports.

Also, Salceda cited a provision in the Safeguard Measures Act that mandated the government to ensure that any relief granted to producers of non-agricultural products should only be made in the interest of consumers. He said that restricting cement imports would wipe out competition in the market and leave local players to dictate prices to the detriment of consumers.

In Philcemcor's case, Salceda said the group could not even ascertain that the industry was harmed by the import surge because revenues, gross margins and cement prices were going up.

Based on the presentation made by Philcemcor during the congressional hearing investigating the alleged industry cartel, Salceda said the cement firms suffered losses because of hefty financing charges that they incurred during the early 1990s when they went on an expansion binge fueled by cheap dollar loans.

On the job cutback in the industry, Salceda said this was the result of the cement firms decision to deliberately cut production capacity by 32 percent to 17 million metric tons a year.

Salceda said it was incongruous that prices of cement have risen by 22 percent to P140 per 40-kilogram bag over the last 13 months when "demand is weak and there is an over-capacity not only in the local market but also in the region." He said this was the main reason why cement imports were coming into the Philippines because of the commodity's questionable price appreciation here.

The price of local cement is 22-percent higher than the P115 level in July last year and 7.7-percent higher than its P130 level in January this year. Although the DTI did not provide comparative date for imports, cement imports were generally priced much lower than local brands last year.

Salceda said Philcemcor members revealed that their production cost was pegged at P82 per bag or 26-percent lower than the landed cost of cement imports of P111 per bag.

Salceda said his co-members also questioned Philcemcor's decision to seek relief from alleged cement dumping from Taiwan Cement Corp. when some of its members were accused of dumping excess capacity into Taiwan. "They (Philcemcor members) should not come into the hearings with blood on their hands. They shipped $27 million worth of cement to Taiwan last year at P$20 per bag."

The committee's trade investigation was triggered by three resolutions filed the past few weeks by lawmakers—Rep. Oscar Rodriguez' resolution to investigate individuals and business entities who continue to manipulate the prices of cement; Rep. Eduardo K. Veloso's proposed inquiry into the possible existence of a cartel in the cement industry and the anomalous practices adversely affecting the price of cement; and a proposal to formulate a comprehensive measure to ensure that local manufacturing industries would be safeguarded from unabated import dumping activities.

The DTI has sought a 10-day extension to review Philcemcor's petition for punitive duties and quantitative restrictions on Taiwan Cement imports into the country. The DTI was supposed to make its decision on the petition before the end of last month.

New market trends call for competitive positioning

FORGET about competition from China and neighboring Asian countries. The challenges faced by the local gifts and housewares sector go beyond the battle for market leadership anyway.

In a briefing with manufacturers, noted Filipino designer PJ Arañador said the current trends instead specify the importance of setting a competitive approach to cope with the dynamic changes happening in the global market.

"The market for houseware items is now composed of younger consumers that go for fresh ideas. As this trend develops, there emerges a segregated merchandise price points, style and look," said Arañador.

He said this direction was opening doors for the development of more branded home products despite the proliferation of low-end items mostly from China. These items would still carry characteristics such as contemporary, practical, utilitarian, personal, sensible and safe.

"Most mass market retailers are now upgrading to perceived higher value products. We can also notice the strong influence of designers in the market," he stressed.

Urging producers to be more open to these developments, Arañador underscored the key role of implementing collective strategies, including reinventing management styles with commitment to quality and sensibility to business dynamics.

"We see that the market has always been driven by trends and forecasts. To adapt to its dynamism, it is important to solidify the basic corporate principles," Arañador said.

The Philippines is considered one of the biggest suppliers of housewares and decorative items ranging from basketwork ceramics, handmade paper, woodcraft and the likes. Manufacturers, however, expect moderate sales this year in the light of a weakening US economy, which is the industry's biggest market.

Shipments have in fact cooled off during the first five months as a result of soft market demand. Exports of holiday decors to the US were the hardest hit, accounting for only $16.24 million, 22-percent lower than its year-ago sales of $20.85 million. Housewares also slid 13.28 percent to $58.417 million from $67.36 million during the comparative period.

While the industry looks at establishing institutional reforms to cushion the effects of sluggish business, it also calls on the government to act on issues such as inadequate quality infrastructure, rising shipping costs, bureaucracy; peace and order, and incentives for research, development and HRD. *Philexport News & Features*

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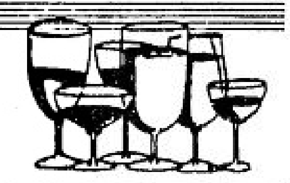

By Victor C. Agustin

WHY is it that Mike Arroyo's good friend and classmate, Honorio Poblador III, always finds himself in embarrassing situations and compromising companions?

The female suspect arrested with three Vietnamese men alleged to be behind a series of bombings in Metro Manila happens to be the same realtor from whom Poblador purchased 36.6 hectares of what turned out to be triple-titled pieces of property in Dasmariñas, Cavite.

Poblador, then acting as president of the sequestered Philippine Communications Satellite Corp., agreed in 1995 to pay P236 million for the Cavite land said to be owned by Florinda V. Estrada, whom the military now says is an ex-intelligence operative under then Col. Panfilo Lacson.

Consisting of three parcels of land, the Cavite deal was incidentally brokered by Eduardo Zialcita, the former chair of the government's Philippine Estates Authority. (Why a former top government land official passed off lands with dubious provenance is another interesting side issue.)

Since that 1995 deal, much of Philcomsat's money as well as the land have been tied up in litigation after it was discovered that at least three titles, one of which was issued to Pilar Development Corp. of the Aguirres, have been issued on the same three parcels of land.

And speaking of Philcomsat, why do the Erap appointees in the board treat their former patron as some kind of a leper now that their former patron is out of power and languishing in jail?

Federico R. Agcaoili, in a letter to the editor (INQUIRER, Aug. 31, 2001), claimed that he was elected to the Philcomsat board by virtue of private sector representation, and not by Estrada's appointment.

Strange, since the Sept. 15, 2000, appointment papers from Malacañang, signed by no less than then PCGG Chair Magdangal Elma, listed four government nominees to the Philcomsat board, specifically, Edgardo Villanueva, Carmelo Africa Jr., Pacifico Marcelo III, and, hmm, Federico R. Agcaoili.

"It is the President's (Estrada's) desire that" Agcaoili and company be elected to the Philcomsat board, as Elma put it, attaching another letter from then Executive Secretary Ronaldo Zamora confirming the same appointments.

Agcaoili, incidentally, is an active Couples for Christ member and immediate past president of the Philippine Bar Association.

Alarm bell

THE HELICOPTER market in the Philippines may be miniscule by global standards, but the competition among the players appears to be fierce and, sometimes, underhanded.

We have received a copy of what appears to be a letter from Air Transportation Office chief Adelberto Yap to his Canadian counterpart asking for information about the safety record of Bell 407 helicopters.

In that letter dated May 18, 2001, Yap said that although there were only five Bell 407 helicopters in the country, the reported accidents of that particular

COKTALES/ B4

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	BUYING	SELLING
ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB A/B*	1,700,000	1,725,000/1,800,000 *
BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	750,000	800,000
CALATAGAN GOLF CLUB A/B*	-	100,000/105,000 *
CAPITOL HILLS	130,000	135,000
CELEBRITY SPORTS	210,000	215,000
EAGLE RIDGE A/B*/C**	350,000/520,000 **	400,000/450,000*/700,000 **
FOREST HILLS A/B*/C**	220,000	240,000/350,000*/450,000 **
MAKATI SPORTS A/B*	-	350,000/400,000 *
METRO CLUB A/B*	-	175,000/180,000 *
MANILA POLO CLUB	-	3,575,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS A/B*	-	800,000/850,000 *
ORCHARD A/B*/C**	600,000 **	250,000/425,000 *
QUEZON CITY SPORTS	220,000	230,000
RIVIERA GOLF A/B*	-	230,000/400,000 *
ROCKWELL CLUB	500,000	600,000
STA. ELENA GOLF	1,800,000	1,825,000
TAGAYTAY H-LANDS CC/GOLF*	-	400,000/950,000
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	760,000	800,000
VALLE VERDE IND/CORP.*	175,000/290,000 *	190,000/325,000 *
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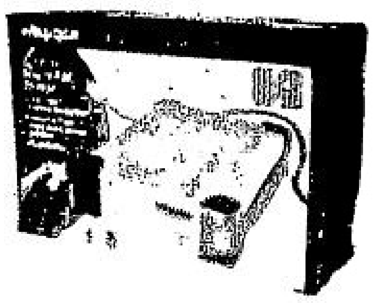

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WIN-WIN DEAL

Gov't buys P3-B Napocor bonds

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE NATIONAL government has bought all the P3 billion worth of bonds maturing in three months that the state-owned National Power Corp. issued yesterday at a yield of five basis points above Monday's 91-day treasury bill rate average.

"This is a win-win situation because the government was able to get a spread above the 91-day T-bill rate while Napocor was able to borrow at a cost lower than the going market rate," National Treasurer Sergio Edeza said.

The proceeds of the Napocor borrowing would be used by the power firm to finance its operations until it has completed a $400-million, seven-year bond issue to be sold through a private placement being arranged by US firm Bear Stearns.

Edeza assured that the government had the flexibility to extend this kind of borrowing to another state-owned institution.

"Why will we give it to the market when they will just take advantage of it?" the national treasurer noted.

The government had to shore up its cash position first before it could extend a loan to the power firm. Edeza pointed out that the Bureau of Treasury had enough cash from the treasury bill auction last Monday and the treasury bond trading yesterday to buy the Napocor bonds.

Last Monday, the Treasury was able to raise P5.5 billion from the treasury bill auction, of which P1.5 billion was raised through a facility outside the auction.

Yesterday, the Treasury's cash position was enhanced by another P4 billion in proceeds from the government bond auction.

While the familiar route was for the government to simply re-lend to Napocor the proceeds of its borrowing, Edeza said the state must also make some money and wait for a better timing to buy the power firm's bonds.

The Treasury maintains a certain level of cash position for the government that it does not want to deplete unless new revenue comes in, similar to what happened yesterday.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho had explained that the $400-million bond issue of Napocor would partially finance its needs for the remaining months of the year.

Proceeds of the long-term borrowing would be used to pay off maturing debts of about $300 million and support capital expenses. The power firm needs to raise $530 million this year to settle debts and finance its operations.

Sunlife chooses Security Bank's DigiBanker

SUN Life of Canada (Philippines) Inc. has tapped the services of Security Bank Corp.'s DigiBanker, the first suite of fully Internet-based corporate cash management solutions to be launched in the Philippines.

DigiBanker will allow Sunlife Financial to monitor cash balances in real time, manage payroll, outsource large volumes of check preparation and releasing, enter into automatic debit arrangements with its policyholders, and instantly credit payments to suppliers, all with the point-and-click convenience of the Internet.

Users will be able to create, review, and authorize transactions based on predefined roles and transaction amounts from the comfort of any Internet-enabled terminal in the world, providing Sunlife executives with unprecedented mobility.

"We are very excited about working with an institution like Sunlife," said Manny Narciso, first vice president and head of Security Bank's cash management division. "Their management takes a very proactive and progressive stance toward the use of technology, which, as an approach to building competitive advantage, is something we ourselves have embraced fully in recent years, and will sustain going forward."

Launched only in March this year, Security Bank's DigiBanker now has a following of more than 60 corporate customers from various industries, including manufacturing, financial services, electronics, media, pharmaceuticals, energy, fast food, and telecoms. The system connects Security Bank's corporate customers directly via the Internet to its automated cash management engine and to all of its 128 online branches nationwide, allowing real-time transacting and retrieval of information on payments or collections transactions as they happen.

The bank said it would also soon offer advanced token-based security and an SMS alert feature that will automatically notify signatories through their cell phones that transactions are awaiting their approval on the Internet.

Cocktales

(From page B3)

model worldwide and here in the Philippines might constrain his office "to ground the rest of the fleet."

Bell is represented locally by Peter Rodriguez, the same fellow that somehow managed to get then Armed Forces Chief of Staff Angelo Reyes to affix his signature for the controversial purchase contract for C-130 transport planes.

Take the 'F' train

WILFREDO Trinidad, the transportation undersecretary who left and never returned to a scheduled meeting last week with Spanish rail representatives because he had to attend an office birthday party, may never need to reschedule a meeting with the Spanish group even just to save face.

According to the DOTC grapevine, Trinidad is scheduled to leave for France next week to visit a French train manufacturer.

The birthday celebrant, by the way, was Trinidad's boss, Transportation and Communications Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez.

Heard through the grapevine

THE SUPREME Court chastised then Justice Fidel Purisima for not inhibiting himself as chair of the 1999 bar examinations where his nephew was a take-two examinee.

So how come the high court is quiet about Justice Santiago Kapunan not inhibiting himself as chair of the 1998 bar examinations when a Kapunan niece, Kristine B. Tiangco, was also an examinee?

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

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1:00 P.M. - 3:30 P.M./Function Rms. A & B
Forum
"The State of English Instruction in
Philippine Education"
Diwa Learning Systems Inc.

4:00 P.M. - 6:30 P.M./Function Rm. A
New Ways to Learn: Piano Methods
for the Millennium Generation
Book Wagon (Pahina, Inc.)

6:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M./Function Rm. B
Book Launching
"Christianity Between Sundays by William B. Girao• Chapter in Philippine Church History by Anne Kwantes •Tomorrow Can Be Beautiful by Harold J. Sala •God's Heart for the Nations by Dean Wiebracht • Get Real! Making Your Mark as a Man by David Dean•Tears for a Season by Luis P. Gatmaitan• May Mga Lihim Kami ni Ingkong by Luis P. Gatmaitan•The Magic of Apo Mayor by Grace D. Chong• Huff and Grudge by Lesley Hicks •The Boy and his Lunch by Edwin Estioko"
OMF Literature, Inc.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2001

10:00 A.M.-12:00 NN/Function Rms. A & B
Seminar
"Walking the Tightrope: Balancing An
Excellent Work and Family Life"
Diwa Learning Systems Inc.

1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M./Function Rm. B
Seminar
"IT in Education"
Diwa Learning Systems Inc.

1:30 P.M. - 4:30 P.M./Function Rm. A
Forum
"Enhancing Communication Skills"
Association of Special Libraries of the Philippines (ASLP)

3:30 P.M. - 4:30 P.M./Function Rm. B
Kids as Storytellers
(for Teachers, Parents, Storytelling Coaches)
Alitaptap Storytelling Contest Winners

5:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M./Function Rm. A
Excerpt from the Drama Musical "Plaridel" &
Karunungan: In Black Theater
VSE Productions

5:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M./Function Rm. B
Launching
"Are You The Forest King?"
Cartoon: A Video Animation
Artwork by Penny Reyes
Animation by UP Film Center
Storyteller: Giselle Sanchez
(Open to the Public)
The Bookmark, Inc. & Pangea Books, Inc.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2001

10:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M./Function Rm. A
Diwa Science Showdown
Diwa Learning Systems Inc.

10:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M./Function Rm. B
Panel Discussion
"How to Deal with Library Donation"
Philippine Association of Academic and
Research Libraries (PAARL)

1:30 P.M. - 4:00 P.M./Function Rm. B
Seminar on
"The 3M in Library Information Science Education:
Management, Money & Marketing"
Philippine Association of Teachers
of Library Science (PATLS)

3:30 P.M. - 4:30 P.M./Function Room A
Website Launch "nerdycarabao.com"
F & J de Jesus, Inc. & Asianware

5:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M./ Function Rms. A & B
Powermark Book Club Launching
OMF Literature, Inc.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2001

10:00 A.M. - 12:00 NN/Function Rm. A
Product Launching
"Angelos and Haggadah"
Belgosa Bookstores Inc.

1:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M./Function Rm. A
Book Launching
"Tinig ng Darating at Iba pang Tula by Teo Baylen• Damdamin: Mga Piling Tula ni Iñigo Ed. Regalado•Sa Tabi ng Dagat at Iba pang Tula by Idelfonso Santos•Sampagitang Walang Bango by Iñigo ed. Regalado•Grass Roots & Cadre in the Protest Movement by Vincent Boudreau•Corruption, the Boom and Bust of East Asia ed. by J. Edgardo Campos• Leaving the Priesthood: A Close Reading of Priestly Departures by Emmanuel Fernandez•Image to Meaning: Essays in Philippine Art by Alice Guillermo•People of Power, A Philippine Worldview of Spirit Encounters by John P. McAndrew • History and Society in the Novels of Ramon Muzones by Ma. Cecilia Locsin-Nava • Magošaha: An Ethnography of the Tawi-Tawi Sama Dilaut by H. Arlo Nimmo•The Philippine Revolution of 1896: Ordinary Lives in Extraordinary Times edited by F. Rodao and Felice Noelle Rodriguez • National/Transnational: Subject Formation and Media in and on the Philippines by Rolando B. Tolentino"
Ateneo de Manila University Press

4:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M./Function Rm. B
Book Launching
"Si Pilandok sa Pulo ng Pawikan by Victoria Añonuevo illustrated by Kora Albano • Ang Pambihirang Buhok ni Lola by Rene Villanueva illustraded by Ibarra Crisostomo • Ibong Adarna 2 by Roberto Alonzo illustrated by Jordan Santos • Bakit Matagal ang Sundo Ko? by Kristine Canon illustrated by Mariano Ching•Magnificent Benito and Two Front Teeth by Augie Rivera and Mike Rivera illustrated by Jason Moss• Sundalong Patpat 2 by Virgilio S. Almario illustrated by Ferdinand Doctolero•Melchora Aquino by Rene Villanueva illustrated by Ferdinand Doctolero • Blue Day by Pipa Escalante illustrated by Abi Goy"
Adarna House

5:30 P.M. - 7:00 P.M./Function Rm. A
Book Launching & Video Presentation
"E-Bookman: Book, Music and Personal Information in the
Palm of Your Hand"
Busybook Distributors

6:30 P.M. - 9:00 P.M./Function Rm. B
National Book Awards
Manila Critics Circle

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2001

4:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M./Function Rm. B
Book Launching
"Marxism and Religion: A Fusion of Horizon by Virgilio A. Ojoy, OP• Mary, Seat of Wisdom: A Contemporary Reflection by Roland D. Mactal, OP•Everyday Sense of Existense in a Day by Fr. Jan Sareno•Justice, Patients' Rights, Psychoethics ed. by Fausto B. Gomez, OP & Dr. Angela Yu-Soliven•Balagtas and His Nationalistic Literature by Dr. Johanna G. Hashim•Dalawampung Tula ng Pag-ibig ni Diosdado Macapagal ed. by Eril Mendoza and Michael Coroza•The Treasures of Lamon Bay by Dr. Frank Tejada•Nakatanim na Granada by Rebecca Añonuevo• Pangarap at Pangitain by Abdon M. Balde, Jr.•Fray Domingo de Salazar, First Bishop of the Philippines by Lucio Gutierrez, OP• Apples and Ampalaya by Augusto V. de Viana• Forensic Medicine by Dr. Teresita R. Sanchez"
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Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Tuesday, Sept. 4, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	60	60	58	58.5	257,900
China Banking Corp.	620	620	620	620	1,450
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	28.5	28.5	27.5	28	81,700
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	206	207	205	207	17,930
Prudential Bank	420	420	420	420	17,290
Philippine National Bank	53	53	53	53	683,800
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	20	20	20	20	4,800
Union Bank of the Phil.	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	1,300
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Filipino Fund Inc	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	10,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1450	1460	1450	1460	2,130
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1180	1180	1150	1160	11,740
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. 31,900		32.5	32.5	31.5	31.5
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.46	0.49	0.46	0.49	50,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	640	640	640	640	2,140
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.034	0.035	0.032	0.033	27,200,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.35	3.35	3	3	10,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	480	495	475	492.5	164,750
Ivantage Corp.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	100,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.03	0.03	0.029	0.03	44,900,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	31.5	31.5	31	31	8,000
Manila Electric Co. B	44	45	44	45	594,200
Petron Corp.	1.76	1.76	1.72	1.74	940,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	70,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.92	1.92	1.92	1.92	100,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	100,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	20,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Republic Cement Corp.	0.85	1.1	0.85	1.1	190,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	5,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.14	1.14	26,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	186,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.25	13.25	13.25	13.25	3,900
Liberty Flour Mills Inc.	15	15	15	15	7,500
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	25.5	26	25.5	26	12,400
RFM Corp.	2.22	2.24	2.22	2.24	175,000
San Miguel Corp. A	40	40	38.5	39.5	257,500
San Miguel Corp. B	55.5	56	55.5	56	182,500
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.6	0.6	0.58	0.59	130,000
Ayala Corp.	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.3	2,734,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.54	1.54	1.54	1.54	125,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.83	0.84	0.83	0.83	370,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0085	0.0085	0.008	0.008	15,000,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.23	0.23	500,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.56	1.56	1.52	1.54	2,029,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	10,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.115	0.115	0.11	0.11	500,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	29	29.5	29	29.5	62,600
Global Equities Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	1,020,000
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	0.2	0.21	0.2	0.21	100,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	110,000
Medco Holdings	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	10,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.68	0.69	0.68	0.69	1,020,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	1,400,000
Music Corp.	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.04	130,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	5.1	5.3	5.1	5.3	40,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.09	0.1	0.09	0.1	330,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	180,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
A Brown Company Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	50,000
Cen Azucar De La Carlota	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	47,000
Jardine Davies Inc.	15	15	15	15	1,600
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	30,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	50,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	300,000
Pryce Corp.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	500,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.78	0.8	0.78	0.8	200,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	12.5	12.75	12.5	12.5	69,900
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	150,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	100,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
Equitable PCI Bank-War	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	94,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0022	0.0022	0.0022	0.0022	12,000,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10	10	10	10	4,000
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.011	8,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.7	4.7	4.65	4.7	10,800,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.2	0.21	0.2	0.2	1,270,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.33	1,680,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.27	0.27'	0.26	0.26	170,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.84	1.88	1.84	1.88	592,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.32	0.4	0.32	0.4	990,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.215	0.22	0.215	0.22	720,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	50,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.94	1.94	1.94	1.94	35,000
SM Development Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.7	0.7	270,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.9	5.9	5.8	5.9	3,412,000
Urbancorp Realty Dev. Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	30,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc B	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	4,000,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	12,000,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	10,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.038	0.039	0.037	0.039	7,800,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	210,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	1,100,000
Omico Corp.	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	24,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	2,100,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	550,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	580,000
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	10,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	2,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	1,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	130,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	1,772,840	121,220,980.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	122,733,890	163,579,490.00
PRO	20,019,000	73,622,480.00
Mining	52,350,000	1,125,500.00
OIL	13,130,000	80,300.00
GRAND TOTALS:	210,015,730	359,659,250.00

	AVERAGES	
Banks & Fin Svc	513.88	DOWN 6.33
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,770.33	UP 4.80
PRO	482.77	DOWN 6.92
Mining	1.1[illegible]30	DOWN 3.33
OIL	1.48	UP 0.03
All Shares Index	754.10	DOWN 2.85
Composite	1,252.58	DOWN 1.03

NO. OF ADVANCES: 25; NO. OF DECLINES: 35; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 38; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 98; NO. OF TRADES: 1,522

DISCLOSURES

PHILWEB.COM Inc. has received notice from warrant holders of the conversion of 17,000 common shares. The listing was slated for Sept. 4. This brings the number of underlying shares listed to 17,000 common shares.

* * *

GLOBE Telecom received on Sept. 3 a copy of an order from Branch 216 of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court temporarily restraining Globe, **Islacom, Piltel**, and **Smart** from implementing the reduction in the free text message allocations granted to subscribers. Hearings on this issue will be held on Sept. 5 and 6.

* * *

THE MANAGEMENT of **Grand Plaza Hotel Corp.** said it was not aware of any reason for the unusual movements of its share price.

* * *

Baguio Gold Holdings Corp. said it was not aware of any material information that affected the trading of its 'B' shares, of any event that triggered the unusual movement of its share price last Aug. 30. *Compiled by Armin P. Adina, PDI Research*

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

Philippines seen as an 'outsourcing Mecca'

BY SHEILA S. PESAYCO

(Last of a series)

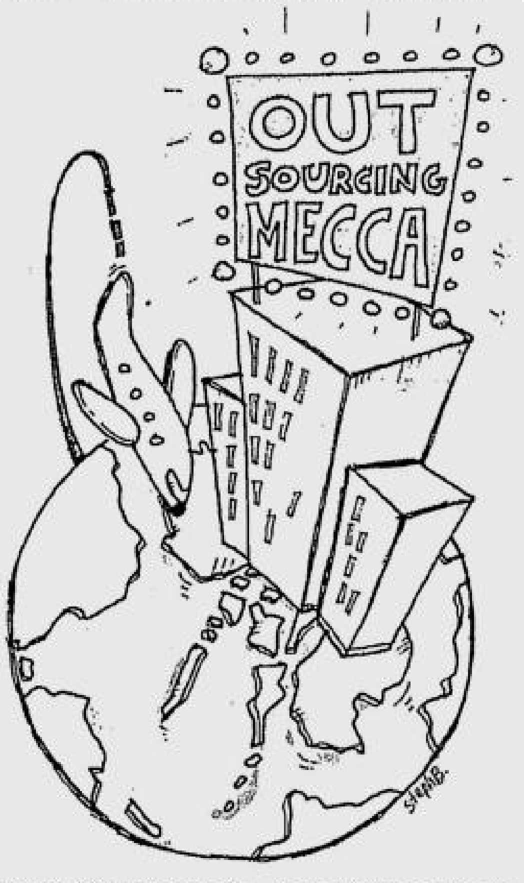
THE COUNTRY'S potential as an outsourcing Mecca has convinced foreigners like Phil Murphy to move here from Australia.

"I found out from the Internet that India and the Philippines will be the next big market for call centers. I chose to move to the Philippines," said Murphy.

His interest in call centers started at 17 as a part-time telemarketer for an Australian company, selling raffle tickets over the phone. His six Australian dollars an hour-pay, plus commissions, helped put him through school.

Now, Murphy, barely in his 30s, is operations manager at Contact World, a joint venture of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and Jardine Salmat of Australia. Salmat runs three call centers in Australia, among the biggest in the country with a total of 650 seats.

The idea for the local joint venture started years ago when Danilo Reyes, Jardine Salmat's general manager in the Philippines, visited PLDT's office in Sampaloc, Manila. Reyes said he saw "an entire building of female phone operators" and was intrigued by the business. Little did he know that his keen eye for beauty and opportunity would eventually serve as his introduction to the growing business of call center operations.



Call center

In its simplest form, a call center is a customer service operation where agents (now called "customer care specialists"), on behalf of a client, place and receive customer calls and/or e-mails, ranging from inquiries and complaints to product promotions. Companies that value and invest in customer relationship management, such as those in banking, financial services and insurance, transportation and freight handling, hotels, and IT usually have a need for call centers.

The size of the operation is described in terms of the number of "seats" instead of agents as phone operators work in shifts to adjust to the different time zones of the countries where the calls originate.

In late 1999, Reyes said a committee in PLDT was already exploring ways to maximize the company's 2,000-strong call center, which was then strictly catering to the internal requirements of the telecommunications giant.

From selling Salmat's directory assistance system to PLDT, Reyes said he found himself later selling the idea of forming a joint venture between the companies to set up a call center. Given its experience in the business, Salmat will provide the "know-how," while PLDT will supply the infrastructure. Both have so far invested $3 million in Contact World at a cost of $4,000 per seat. The company has 205 seats, 73 of which have so far been filled.

It currently services outbound calls, mostly for telemarketing and inquiry. For PLDT, it handles the e-cash product Smart Money and the PLDT Txt 135 how-to-use inquiries. Currently in a test phase are its services to international clients such as a telephone helpdesk for US inventors and credit card inquiries for Maple Credit, a rival of American Express. Reyes says the company expects to seal a deal with around six international firms within the year.

Competition

Competition in the industry is heating up, he says, not just in other parts of the region but within the country as well. There are currently over 20 call centers in the country handling outsourcing operations, excluding the "mom-and-pop" type, run by 10 people, handling one client and charging as low as $2 per hour.

Aside from Contact World, among the big players are Software Ventures International (SVI) and SPI's E-Telecare.

Unlike the route taken by most of its local rivals, SVI bought a call center in the United States to immediately establish its presence in the international market. Telemarketing Concepts, based in Yorktown Heights, New York, has 400 agents. In addition, SVI runs SVI Connect, which has 200 seats in Ortigas Cehter, Pasig City.

E-Telecare, meanwhile, is a joint venture between SPI and former top executives of the McKinsey management consultancy group that has extensive experience in the business.

E-Telecare's office in Eastwood City Cyberpark in Libis, Pasig City, houses 300 seats, servicing US telecommunication

PHILIPPINES/ B9

BPI units biggest financiers

BY ELENA R. TORRIJOS

SUBSIDIARIES of the Bank of the Philippine Islands topped the list of the country's biggest financing companies in terms of net income in the first quarter, according to records of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

BPI Capital Corp. led the pack with a total profit of P173.82 million in the January-March period, followed by BPI Card Finance Corp., with P149.44 million, and BPI Leasing Corp., with P90.22 million.

PCI Leasing Finance Corp. came in fourth as its net income reached P52 million, while state-owned People's Credit and Finance Corp. registered a profit of P17.73 million.

Rounding out the list were LBP Leasing Corp., P11.38 million; Orix Metro Leasing and Finance Corp. of the Metrobank group, P11.1 million; UCPB Leasing & Finance, P9.465 million; First Malayan Leasing & Finance Corp., P7.8 million; and, Radiowealth Finance Corp. Inc., P7.315 million.

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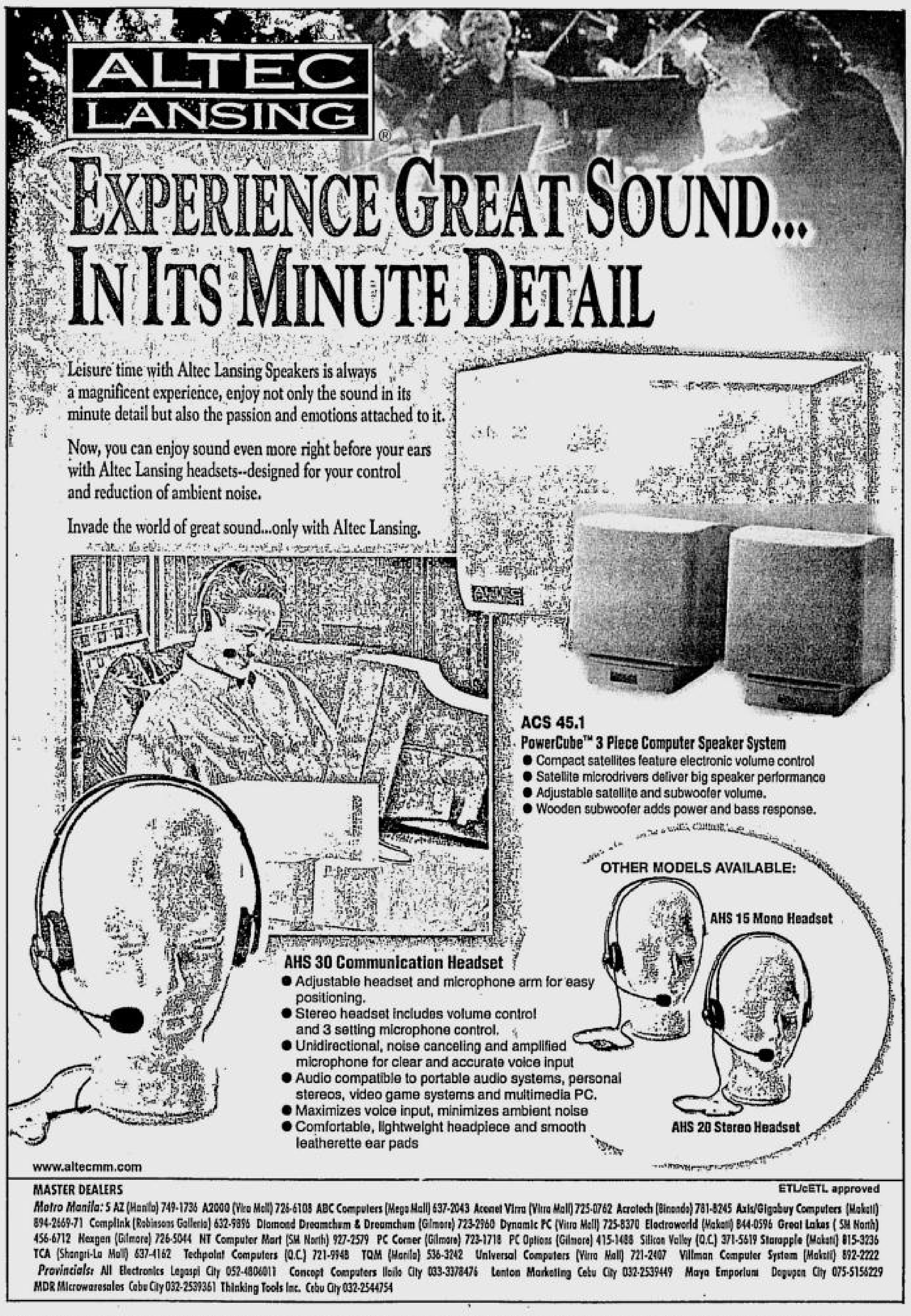
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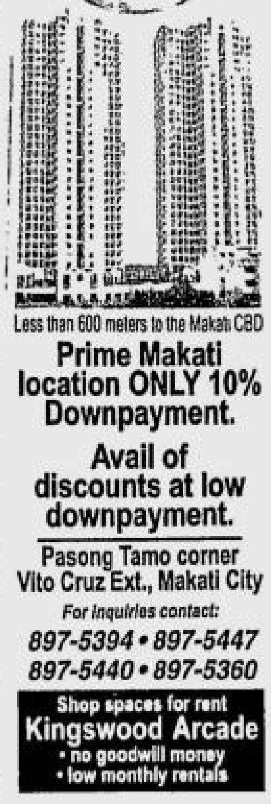

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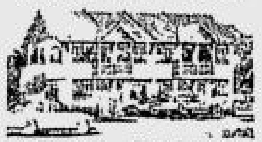

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late •CARIDAD M. PINEDA• has been settled by the heirs extrajudicially before Notary Public Atty. Danilo Pineda per Doc.No. 396; Page No. 16; Book No. V; Series of 2001 Angeles City

PDI-Aug.22, 29 & Sept.5, 2001

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late **Celsa B. Bernales** has been extrajudicially settled by her heir on June 11, 2001 under Doc.#188; Page#39; Book#3; Series of 2001 before Notary Public Atty. Felixberto F. Abad of Quezon City (PDI-Aug. 22, 29, Sept. 5, 2001)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given that Class A Share No. A00323 dated 4 May 1977 Calatagan Golf Club, Inc. under the name of Jose Ramiscal Jr. was lost (PDI-Sept. 5, 12, 19, 2001)

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10th AsiaFood Expo 2001

Showcasing Food Technology in the 21st Century

In the interest of enhancing the global competitiveness of Filipino entrepreneurs in the food sector, the 10th International Exposition on Food Processing, Packaging and Handling Machinery, Equipment and Technology more popularly known as the AsiaFood Expo 2001 is being staged today September 5, 2001 and will run up to September 8, 2001 at the World Trade Center in Pasay City. This event showcases the latest trends in food equipment and technology while providing a suitable venue for local and international food manufacturers to exchange views on business opportunities and joint ventures. The exhibit also highlights the latest technological developments and innovations on the multifaceted nature of the food sector.

Because of its vital role in the national development of the country, sustained efforts are being jointly undertaken by businesses in the local food industry and the government to provide the necessary impetus for profitable growth in the new global economy. Through improved productivity, quality and marketability of food products, the ultimate benefit is expected to redound to the consumer who will enjoy the cutting edge innovations, gratification of safe and high quality food products.

Now on its 10th year, this annual activity is once again being organized by Trade Information Marketing and Exhibitions, Inc. (T.I.M.E.) putting together the most recent products as well as ancillary food processing systems and technologies in manufacturing, packaging and handling, storage and delivery. Discussions on the techniques in marketing food products are also going to be held. The four-day affair coincides with the staging for its 5th year of the Food and Drinks Asia 2001, an international exposition of specialty, foods, delicatessen, confectionery, beverages, beers, wines and spirits and Food Franchising 2001, a venue for international franchising and business systems. FoodServ Asia 2001, an international exposition on food service, catering systems, supplies, equipment and technology is also a highlight of the affair.

A total of 698 exhibitors from 35 countries all over the world are participating in this year's Expo. FoodAsia Expo 2001 is supported by government agencies and private organizations as follows: Office of the President of the Philippines, Department of Agriculture, Department of Trade & Industry, Department of Science & Technology, Board of Investments, Philippine Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Philippine Association of Meat Processors, Inc., Philippine Amalgamated Supermarkets Association, Inc., Philippine Exporters Confederation, Inc., Meat Importers & Traders Association, Inc., Philippine Federation of Bakers Association, Inc., Integrated Food Manufacturers, Association of the Philippines for Productivity, Philippine Association of Food Technologists, Inc., Association of Filipino Franchisers, Inc. and International Wines & Spirits Association.

On its 10th year, AsiaFood Expo expresses its gratitude to its benefactors who have made this much expected annual event the vehicle for strengthening the competitiveness of the local food industry to vie in the dynamic global markets. The singular importance of the food sector in the well-being of Filipinos as well as its role in nation-building remains an inspiration to organize even more expansive and meaningful exhibitions in the future.

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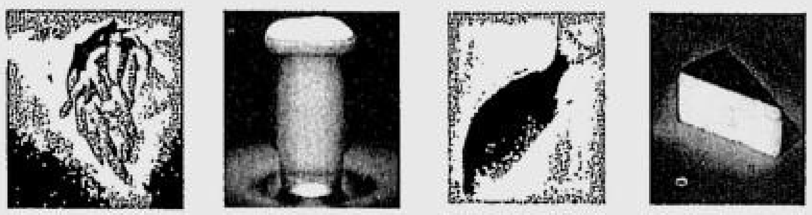

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Joint sale of geothermal plants, steam fields seen

By Ronnel W. Domingo

NATIONAL Power Corp. president Jesus N. Alcordo said he was amenable to the consolidation and joint sale of the company's geothermal plants and the steam fields of PNOC Energy Development Corp.

"If we privatize only our geothermal plants, who will be interested to buy them without the steam fields?" Alcordo said.

Alcordo said it would also be difficult for PNOC-EDC to sell only the steam fields without the power plants that they serve.

"It makes sense to integrate them (geothermal plants and steam fields) and sell them as a package for this will give us better value," he said.

The official said Napocor has already organized a team that would oversee the plan.

He said it might entail putting the assets under one government agency, which would likely be Philippine National Oil Co.

He explained that Napocor's five geothermal plants were absorbed by the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp., which, however, is not an operating company.

PNOC-EDC chair Sergio F. Apostol earlier said the company was keen on buying Napocor's geothermal assets in line with its own plan to privatize its steam fields.

"We have offered to buy all of Napocor's power plants that are drawing steam from our fields," Apostol said in an earlier interview.

He said PNOC-EDC made the offer to Alcordo even before the Electricity Industry Reform Act was enacted.

The law provides for the creation of Psalm Corp., which would absorb all of Napocor's disposable assets.

Perks for textile mills modernization readied

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry is sewing up a package of incentives and logistics support program for the moribund textile industry in a bid to sharpen the competitiveness of Philippine-made apparel in a quota-free market.

Trade Secretary Manuel "Mar" Roxas II said the DTI has been finalizing a set of incentives that would encourage the Textile Mills Association of the Philippines to modernize at least two of the country's existing mills.

The Philippines used to be a major textile miller but the industry fell a deep rut because players did not modernize their mills and the government turned a blind eye on the rampant smuggling of textiles.

Data from the Federation of Philippine Textile Industries (FPTI) showed that the installed capacity of spinning mills have fallen from 1.5 million spindles in 1991 to 350,000 last year. Roughly half of the estimated 300,000 tons of textiles used annually in the country have been gobbled up by imports, most of which were brought in illegally or without paying their duties.

Roxas said the textile millers should retool and upgrade their production lines in order to produce at least any of three of the top 5 import fabrics used by garments exporters to bring down their costs.

The DTI would also move to spur investors to put up a logistics center that would provide consolidated distribution services directly to client stores of garment exporters. Also, the DTI has promised to cut down on the bottleneck at the Bureau of Customs to boost the industry's turnaround time.

To further enhance the competitiveness of garment exports, the DTI would encourage providers in laundry, printing and embroidery to expand their operations in order to boost value added to garment exporters.

The lack of raw material suppliers has been a major drawback to the Philippines to compete with other low-cost garment exporting countries. Garments and Textile Export Board executive director Felicitas Agoncillo-Reyes said the Philippines should focus on its cost factors because buyers and retailers would choose lower cost countries and those that benefit from preferential trade arrangements with the US such as sub-Saharan Africa, which will get duty-free status in the US by next year.

Exports of the country's apparel manufacturing industry are expected to slump further over the next 12 months as government officials expect the US, the country's biggest market, to recover only in the second half of the year.

Reyes said: "American retailers, especially department stores, are having problems generating consumer traffic and they are having high inventory levels. Retail recovery is now being anticipated in the summer of 2002."

Garments and textile exports dropped 3.4 percent to $1.794 billion in the first seven months this year from $1.856 billion during the same period this year. This was blamed on the 1.13-percent drop on exports to the US to $1.37 billion in the first seven months this year. The US accounts for 76 percent of the country's total garment and textile exports.

Reyes said that other apparel exporters were suffering from the weak US demand. "The US apparel market has been very soft this year with its global imports growing by only 4.5 percent from January to May compared with the same period last year."

But the Philippines appears to be getting the brunt of the weak American demand because of its high prices. The GTEB said that some American wholesalers complained that the country cut, make and trim costs have reached $40 per dozen compared with other low cost suppliers average cost of $19 to $23 per dozen.

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Per DTI NCR Permit Number 2708, series of 2001

Ecozones seen as big market for natural gas

ENERGY Secretary Vicente S. Perez said two dozen economic zones between Batangas and Manila serve as potential markets for natural gas, propping up the feasibility of laying down a land-based pipeline that would bring Malampaya gas to the country's capital.

"Locators in these ecozones may have power generators that can be fuelled with natural gas," Perez said in a press briefing.

Also, he said that the buildings and other facilities of these companies could use gas-fed air-conditioning units.

Aside from a ready market provided by three power plants with an aggregate capacity of 2,700 megawatts, the Malampaya consortium is also looking for parallel uses of natural gas.

One prospect is a venture with Bonifacio Gas Corp., which specializes in gas-fired absorption technology in air-conditioning systems.

The secretary earlier said that a Japanese company has joined the growing list of firms interested in the proposed onshore 100-kilometer pipeline project.

In an interview in June, PNOC Exploration Corp. president Rufino Bomasang said the state-run firm has completed a study on the feasibility of the project in 1998, but that it was awaiting the results of a similar study led by Spex.

He said PNOC-EC was very interested in putting up the pipeline, but the government preferred to let the private sector take on the project.

"But if (private firms) would not do it, we would be glad to do it," Bomasang said.

The natural gas from the offshore fields northwest off Palawan is expected to flow by October.

From the wells, the gas would be brought to Batangas for processing via a 504-km subsea pipeline.

Perez also said Japanese and German manufacturers of buses and trucks than run on compressed natural gas were offering technical assistance to the government.

He said it would be easy to introduce the technology to bus companies serving routes in Metro Manila, Northern Luzon and Southern Tagalog.

GOINGS-ON

Yapster's e-Travel Inc.

IN A BID to gain a foothold on the $550-billion e-business market, Philippine-based Yapster e-conglomerate Inc. has set up its online travel management services catering to the corporate market. Yapster e-Travel Inc. (2TravelWorld.com) said it would have a total of P100 million investment in over five years to run the country's online travel facility. The bulk of the investment will go to developing value-added services.

For the first year, Yapster e-Travel expects 80 percent of its revenues from corporate travel accounts, considered to be a fast growing segment of the market. Cyber Dialogue research shows that more than 40 percent of the current retail travel market are business-related.

Yapster e-Travel's CEO Annabelle Yap said that travel has been the top-selling category on the Net.

Total joins expo

TOTALFINAELF Philippines Corp. will be one of the major sponsors at the 2001 Engineering Exposition scheduled on Sept. 6 to 8, 2001 at the Philippine Trade Training Center in Pasay City.

Carrying the theme "Millennium Partnership of Engineering and Technology Associations," the exposition is this year's most prestigious and largest gathering of engineers and technical practitioners representing industry and technology.

TotalFinaElf will showcase its capability to supply the wide range of requirements of the industrial and technical sector. Up for exhibition is its line of industrial lubricants and other fuel products.

This year's engineering exposition aims to feature new technologies to the industry users. The event will have technology exhibits, technical seminars as well as product presentation.

Congress sets probe into GSIS, Napocor row

By Ronnel W. Domingo

LAWMAKERS yesterday sought an investigation into a simmering dispute involving a controversial plan by the National Power Corp. to reinsure its $10 billion worth of assets.

Napocor said in a statement that it welcomed the investigation.

On Monday, Napocor president Jesus Alcordo offered to quit over the issue.

Alcordo is locked in a dispute with Government Service Insurance System president and general manager Winston Garcia, who has accused the Napocor chief of harboring a hidden agenda in insisting that Napocor have a hand in choosing its reinsurance brokers.

Alcordo said he would resign "if anybody can convince me that what I'm doing is wrong. But I am convinced that what I am doing is for the good of Napocor."

Napocor is set to hold an auction on Friday to choose brokers for its "all-risk insurance policy" due to expire by the end of the month. The GSIS will hold its own bidding.

Alcordo insisted Napocor was not stepping on the GSIS' turf in pressing ahead with the auction.

Under the law, only the GSIS had the responsibility to secure all properties for all government agencies, including Napocor.

Alcordo had said Napocor was just asking to "participate" in the bidding process to get the best rates.

The GSIS' Garcia said earlier there was "something wrong" with Alcordo's position on the issue.

He disclosed that Alcordo asked him to deal with a "private consultant" over a scheduled auction of Napocor's $10-billion insurance policy.

Philippines . . .

(From page B5)

firms, financial institutions, and issuers of travelers checks. It also has an office in Monrovia, California, conducting sales and marketing for the company.

While its operations only began in September last year, E-Telecare already accounted for a quarter of SPI's first-half 2001 revenues. SPI expects its call center unit to generate up to $30 million in revenues once it reaches full capacity of 750 seats. So far, it has invested over $10 million in its call center.

Neutral accent

In separate interviews, the top executives of the three companies agree India still poses the biggest threat to the Philippines in the call center outsourcing business. While the Philippines remains competitively priced (ranging from $6 to $10 per hour per seat), it cannot match the number of call center agents in India which now stands at around 300,000 versus the less than 10,000 agents available in the Philippines.

In terms of the quality of speech and infrastructure, however, the executives believe the country still has an edge.

"We're unbeatable when it comes to the way we speak English. We're also more patient in handling calls and more customer-oriented," said SVI assistant vice president Domingo Guanio.

Contact World's country manager Andres Enverga said Filipinos have a "neutral accent" compared with Indians. Still, at Contact World, agents handling international calls are trained to speak "Yankee English" and undergo an "American culturalization process." Greeting visitors at its Ortigas office are an American flag and a poster that reminds its agents that the area is a "Yankee zone."

"When clients dial a 1-800 number, they'd think they're still talking to an American when, in fact, it's already a Filipino operator taking the call," Enverga explained.

More than the proficiency in the language, SVI's Guanio says Filipinos also possess the right attitude for the job. "For instance, they have the psychology when it comes to handling rejections in telemarketing."

A 1999 regional study by Australia-based Call Center Research also shows the Philippines invests heavily in keeping the quality of customer service it provides, ranking second only to Australia. India was ranked four notches lower than the Philippines.

It is for these reasons that convinced US giants such as America Online Inc. and Citibank NA to establish their own call centers in the Philippines. AOL has a 600-strong workforce in the Clark Special Economic Zone, handling more than 10,000 e-mail inquiries a day. Citibank set up its regional call center in Eastwood City Cyberpark, primarily handling its credit card operations.

Further exploding

Still in its infancy, the growth of the outsourcing business in call centers is seen further exploding in the coming years. In the United States alone, it is already a $90-billion business, of which only 20 percent is so far being outsourced abroad, industry sources say.

Its huge potential for Philippine players is luring even small companies like Dot Consult, a Web-based applications provider, to enter the call center industry. The call center will start with only 15 to 20 agents handling delivery requests of local restaurants and fast-food chains.

Jun del Valle, Dot Consult's president and chief operating officer, said the move would allow the company to quickly adopt to the changing needs of the market. He admitted outsourced work for website development had slowed as companies abroad "try to make do with what they have and drop web investments from their expenditure list."

On the other hand, the slowdown in IT investments of US companies has also been opening a lot of doors for outsourcing, which allows them to cut costs.

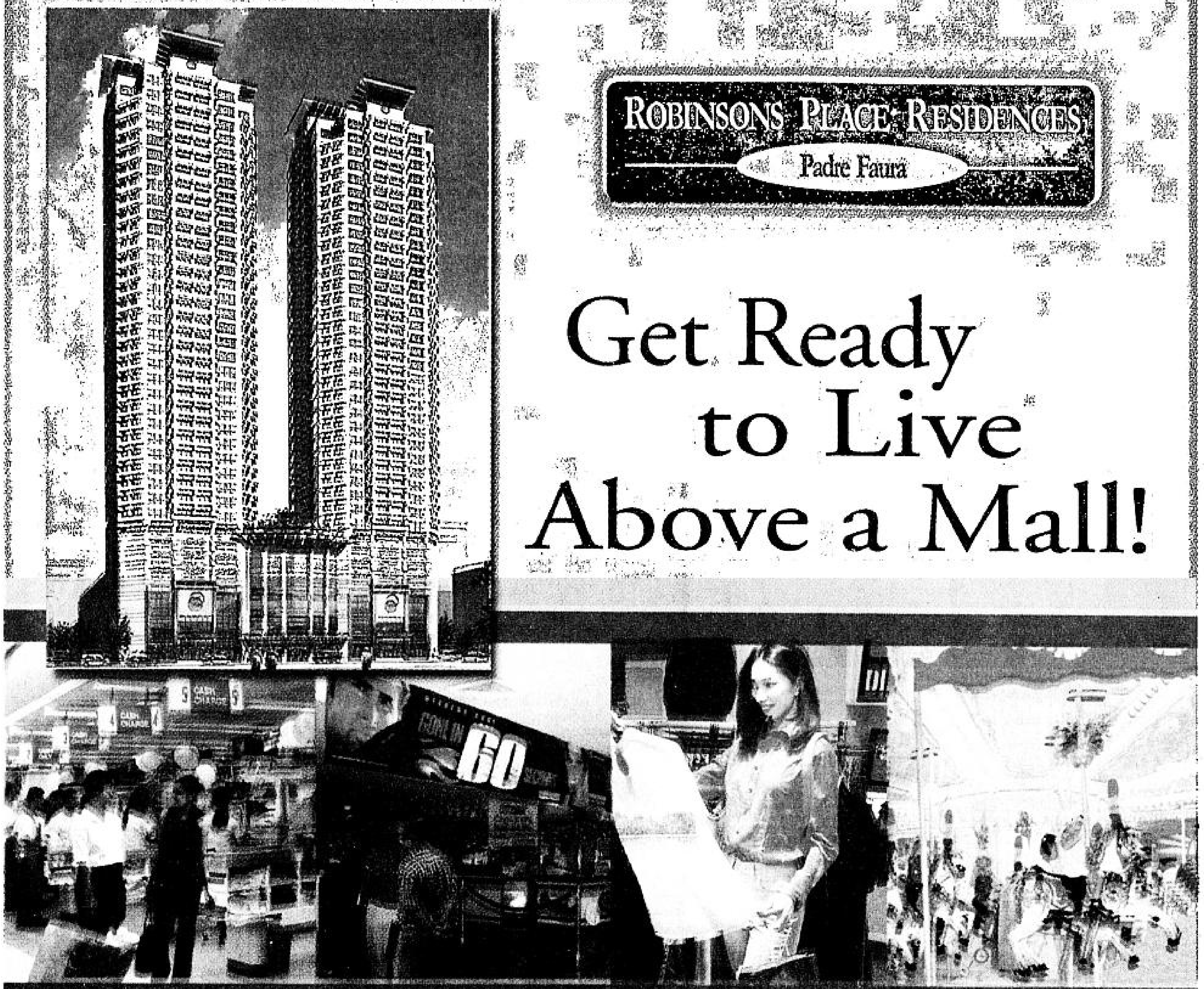
"It's a big opportunity for the Philippines because whatever you outsource here, you'll hire Filipinos who are educated, who have the work ethic, and the culture of being service-oriented," says SVI's Guanio.

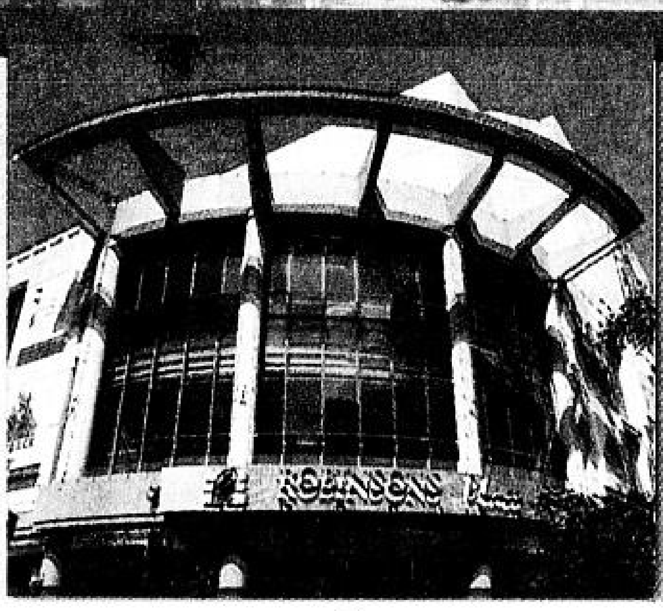
Five years from now, however, China will pose the biggest threat to the country in the outsourcing business, said Contact World's Reyes.

"High school students in China are now being taught to speak English," he said.

China's numbers mean the window of opportunity for India and the Philippines will soon get smaller. As it is, China is now starting to undercut competition in data encoding services. It could match India's available 300,000 software experts, although at present only 45,000 of them are highly skilled. Wait after five years. Other countries like Malaysia and Indonesia also smell the profit opportunity.

"The Philippines will need to face up to this reality," says Contact World's Reyes.





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- FAMILY PETITIONS/SPONSORSHIPS

USA SEMINAR DETAILS

MANILA

DATE	:	September 8, 2001 (Saturday) 2:00 P.M.
VENUE	:	DUSIT HOTEL NIKKO (M-Floor), AYALA CENTER, MAKATI CITY
TEL. NO.	:	891-5686 to 89 / 891-5920 to 21
FEES	:	P 700 PREPAID / P 900 WALK-IN

CEBU

DATE	:	September 11,2001 (Tuesday) 5:30 P.M.
VENUE	:	WATERFRONT CEBU CITY HOTEL SALINAS DRIVE, LAHUG, CEBU CITY
TEL.NO.	:	(032) 255 6873 TO 74; 254 2495; 254 2684; 256 3872 to 73
FEES	:	P 700 PREPAID/P 900 WALK-IN

DAVAO

DATE	:	September 13, 2001 (Thursday) 5:30 P.M.
VENUE	:	MARCO POLO HOTEL, C.M. Recto St., Davao City
TEL. NO.	:	(082) 222-1351 to 52 // 222-2710 to 11
FEES	:	P 700 PREPAID / P 900 WALK-IN

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education, Culture, and Sports
Third Elementary Education Project

Invitation for Bids

Date: August 31, 2001
Loan No. 4108-PH
IFB No. P1SU-CO/172001-WB

1. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines (through the Department of Education Culture and Sports (DECS) has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) in various currencies towards the financing of Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP). It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract for supply and delivery of School Furniture to Selected Public Elementary Schools in the Philippines.
2. The Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS), Central Project Implementation Support Unit (CPISU) for Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP), now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the supply and delivery of school furniture to selected public elementary schools in the Philippines.
3. For the purpose of this bidding, eligible bidders shall be those who have experience in the supply or selling and distribution or delivery of school furniture. The Purchaser will grant a margin of preference to goods manufactured in the Philippines.
4. Interested eligible bidders may inspect the bidding documents at or obtain further information from the Office of Bids and Awards Committee for Foreign Assisted Projects (BAC-FAPs), Ground Floor Rizal Bldg. II, DECS Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, Tel. # 632-1361 local 2085 or 636-6542, *http://www.decs.gov.ph.*
5. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested bidders starting **August 31, 2001**, upon submission of letter of intent to the above and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00).
6. The provisions in the Instruction to Bidders and in the General Conditions of Contract are the provisions of the World Bank *Standard Bidding Documents: Procurement of Goods*, January 1995, revised March 2000.
7. Bids must be delivered to the Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Building I, Department of Education, Culture and Sports, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, Philippines, on or before 10:00 A.M. on October 23, 2001, and must be accompanied by a security of not less than two percent (2%) of total bid price.
8. Bids will be opened in the presence of bidder's representatives who choose to attend at 10:00 A.M. on October 23, 2001 at Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Building, I, Department of Education, Culture and Sports, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City.
9. Prior to bid opening, a pre-bid conference will be held on **September 18, 2001,** 10:00 a.m., at the address indicated in paragraph 8.

(Sgd.) **ERNESTO S. PANGAN**
Undersecretary and Chairman
DECS-BAC

(PDI--Sept. 3, 5 & 7, 2001)

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AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND SEMINAR DETAILS

MANILA

DATE	:	September 8, 2001 (Saturday) 12:00 NOON
VENUE	:	DUSIT HOTEL NIKKO (TANGUILE ROOM, 2nd FLOOR), AYALA CENTER, MAKATI CITY
TEL. NO.	:	891-5686 to 89 / 891-5920 to 21
FEES	:	P 700 PREPAID / P 900 WALK-IN

CEBU

DATE	:	September 11,2001 (Tuesday) 6:30 P.M.
VENUE	:	WATERFRONT CEBU CITY HOTEL SALINAS DRIVE, LAHUG, CEBU CITY
TEL.NO.	:	(032) 255 6873 TO 74; 254 2495; 254 2684; 256 3872 TO 73
FEES	:	P 700 PREPAID/P 900 WALK-IN

DAVAO

DATE	:	September 13, 2001 (Thursday) 6:30 P.M.
VENUE	:	MARCO POLO HOTEL, C.M. Recto St., Davao City
TEL. NO.	:	(082) 222-1351 to 52 // 222-2710 to 11
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Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSION
Makati City

SHIRLEY P. FERNANDEZ, in her own behalf and minors HENJIE P. FERNANDEZ, ELVIS P. FERNANDEZ, MERRY JANE FERNANDEZ and SHENNMAE P. FERNANDEZ, represented by their mother, SHIRLEY P. FERNANDEZ,
Petitioners,

- versus - SSC CASE NO. 8-14561-96

SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM and DELIA E. FERNANDEZ
Respondents.
x -- x

NOTICE OF RESOLUTION ENTERED

TO: DELIA E. FERNANDEZ

GREETINGS:

Notice is hereby given that on the 1st day of August, 2001, a RESOLUTION, consisting of seven pages, was entered in the above-mentioned case, the dispositive portion of which reads as follows:

> "**WHEREFORE, PREMISES CONSIDERED,** this Commission hereby finds, and so holds, that the petitioners are the primary beneficiaries of deceased SSS member Benjamin A. Fernandez lawfully entitled to the SS death benefit.
>
> Accordingly, the SSS is hereby ordered to immediately pay the petitioners the appropriate death benefit, subject to its existing rules and regulations.
>
> **SO ORDERED."**

SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSION

(PDI – Sept. 5, 2001)

---

sbma **BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE**
SBMA Building 255, Barryman Street, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Philippines
Tel. Nos. (047) 252-4214/4124/4424/4230/4424 • Fax No. (047)252-4284

INVITATION FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

All parties interested to bid for the project described below are invited to apply for Application for Eligibility and to Bid with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), Subic Bay Freeport, Olongapo City. Only eligible contractors will be invited to participate in the forthcoming bidding.

A. Name and Location of Project : **IMPROVEMENT TO WILDLIFE CENTER @ JEST CAMP, UPPER MAU, Subic Bay Freeport Zone**

B. Project Description/Scope of Works:

The proposed project shall include securing/applying of all permits, supervision, labor, materials and equipment required for the Proposed Project.

The proposed project includes the following:

a) Entrance Gate - Construction of structural steel are with a ticket booth, sliding steel gate, hardscape and landscape, rip-rap stone wall
b) Souvenir Shop - Construction of one storey concrete and masonry building with one unit toilet, covered roof on structural steel frame with polycarbonate skylight
c) Entrance Plaza Complex - Construction of circular segmental paver and masonry structure surrounded with hardscape, benches and signages
d) Aviary - Construction of steel cage structure with entrance area, elevated walk, pond, information signages and secondary bird cages
e) Mini-Zoo - Construction of 8 units independent steel frame cages with covered roof on structural steel frame and feeding/service area
f) Fishing Lagoon - Construction of concrete man made lagoon with wooden boardwalk across the lagoon

C. Approved Budget Cost: **Php = 14.4M**

D. Required PCAB Registration and Classification/License:

PCAB Principal Qualification and Category
General Building "B"

Kinds of Project and Respective Ranges
Building and Industrial Plant "MA"

E. Cost of forms for Application for Eligibility and to Bid, dates and place of issuance: Php 200.00 (non-refundable);

Issuance date: September 24 and 25, 2001 only, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Engineering Department, PWTSG, SBMA
Room 223 Building 255, Barryman Road, SBFZ

F. Deadline for submission of Accomplished Application for Eligibility to Bid: October 05, 2001, 5:00 p.m.

Address to:

ATTY. CHITO M. CRUZ
BAC Chairman/Sr. D.A. for Support Services
c/o Engineering Department
Room 222, Building 255 Barryman Road
Subic Bay Freeport Zone

G. Time and date of submission and opening of Bids, Pre-Bid Conference and Site Inspection shall be confirmed in the Notice of Eligibles.

Application for Eligibility and to Bid is open to all contractors with valid PCAB (Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board) Contractors License and Registration. Prospective bidders are required to submit a Letter of Intent and Certified True Copy of the Contractors License upon purchase of the forms for Application for Eligibility and to Bid and shall bring the original copy of the Contractors PCAB License Classification Registration for verification and authentication purposes.

Bid Documents shall be issued only to the eligible contractors duly notified by SBMA in writing upon payment of the non-refundable cost of the documents.

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the latest provisions of PD 1594 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations as Amended.

The SBMA reserves the right to reject any and all bids, waive any defect therein and accept the offer it deems most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) **CHITO M. CRUZ**
BAC Chairman/Sr. D.A. for Support Services

(PDI – Aug. 29, Sept. 5 & 12, 2001)

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(NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION)

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID
AD NO. PD 2001-44

Rebidding Date : September 12, 2001

PB010822-T3WG6524	BATTERY BANK, 48 volts, Gel type, Maintenance Free
PB010822-T3JR6525	TIG WELDING GLOVES
PB010822-T3JR6527	SHAFTING BARS
PB010822-T3JR6528	LABORATORY CHEMICALS (Acetone, Perchloric Acid, Sodium Peroxide, Potassium Disulfate)/ CLEANING SOLUTION, Heavy Duty, Water Soluble, Non-toxic
PB010822-T3JR6530	LOAD METER INDICATOR, 09-384001-1 for Super King Air 350 RP-2850
PB010822-T3JR6547	SERVICES: One year supply of Mineral/Purified Water
PB010822-T3JR6548	SERVICES: Job Order for the Installation of Additional Conduit & Cable Tray at Mexico S/S, Pampanga/Expansion of Cable Trench/repair of Mitsubishi Stake/Boom Truck
PB010828-T3JR6567	SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF FUEL (UNLEADED GASOLINE & DIESEL) CONFORMS WITH THE QUALITY STANDARDS PRESCRIBED UNDER RA #3749-CLEAN AIR ACT (To be purchased thru Open Ended Purchase order for a period of six months starting October 2001
PB010828-T3JR6616	OFFICE/COMPUTER SUPPLIES (Ink Cartridge, Bond Paper, etc.) (To be purchased thru Open Ended Purchase Order for a period of six months)
PB010828-T3JR6615	AUTOMOTIVE SPARE PARTS FOR NISSAN URVAN, Model 1998 (Brake Master Assy., Hose Control, Clutch Fan, Alternator, Stabilizer, etc.)
PB010828-T3JR6596	BEARING, Pillow Block/ball Single Row, Wide Size, Fix type
PB010828-T3JR6569	SERVICES: Annual Medical Laboratory Examination (CBC, Urinalysis, X-ray, etc.)
PB010828-T3JR6561	SERVICES: Job Order for Gear Cutting of Worm Gear for Clarifier Agitator

**** Bidding Date : September 21, 2001 - 10:00 AM**

2001-44-01	LUBRICATING OIL, Industrial, Viscocity Grade: 32/46/68/10
2001-44-02	TELEPHONE SET, Single Line Telephone w/ 4 pin Connector
2001-44-03	AIRCON SPARE PARTS (Auxiliary Fan, Compressor, Evaporator Assy., etc.)
2001-44-04	SAFETY MATERIALS (Working Clothes/Shoes, Safety Helmet, Ear Plugs, etc.)
2001-44-05	OFFICE SUPPLIES (Fastener, etc.) (To be purchased thru Open Ended Purchase Order for a period of six months)
2002-44-06	CONSTRUCTION/ELECTRICAL HARDWARE & SUPPLIES (Sand, Gravel, Hose, Pipe, Ballast, Starter, Flourescent Lamp, Elbow, etc.)
2001-44-07	AUTOMOTIVE SPARE PARTS (Brake Pad, Disc/Bearing Assy, etc.)
2001-44-08	SERVICES: Supply of Labor & Materials for the Internal Coating of Transformer Oil Tanks
2001-44-09	SERVICES: Supervision, Calibration & Transportation of Ultraviolet Light Meter, Type BCI 95

Interested parties are invited to prequalify and to submit sealed bids on the above to be opened publicly at the Sampaguita Rm. Ground Floor Bldg. 2 NPC-OBC, Quezon Avenue cor. Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City. Accreditation forms can be obtained from Mondays thru Fridays at the Accreditation and Bidding Support Services, Materials Management Department, Ground Floor, Bldg. 2 upon payment of P50.00, submission of company's TIN and proof of listing at the telephone directory. **Deadline for submission of duly accomplished forms to participate in this bidding is on September 11, 2001.

Bidding documents available on September 3, 2001 upon payment of P50.00 which is non-refundable, presentation of original Certificate of Accreditation and supplier's number (DCE). **Last day of issuance of bidding documents **September 14, 2001.**

Issuance of accreditation forms and bidding documents mornings only, 8:30 to 11:30 A.M. For inquiries please call no. 921-25-74.

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation.

MATERIALS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
NPC-OBC (Head Office)
Diliman, Quezon City

(PDI--Sept. 3 & 5, 2001)

People, Events & Products

ARIES B. ESPINOSA, Assistant Editor

Marketing and management seminars

MANSMITH and Fielders Inc. will be offering two seminars, "From Selling to Managing" from Sept. 7 to 8 and "Fundamentals of Marketing" from Sept. 11 to 13 at the Manila Galleria Suites. Newly promoted managers can learn transition and management skills that will allow them to handle additional responsibilities and challenges during the "From Selling to Managing" workshop. Building brand awareness and a winning product concept are among the topics included in the "Fundamentals of Marketing" seminar. For inquiries, call 723-6671, 416-4662 or e-mail mansmith@i-manila.com.ph

RITM course in tropical diseases

THE RESEARCH Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM) of the Department of Health will hold its 3rd postgraduate course in infectious and tropical diseases titled "Research and Technology: Their roles in the Management of Infectious and Tropical Diseases" on Sept. 6 and 7 at the RITM auditorium, Training Center, Filinvest City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City. Topics would include: malaria, dengue, schistosomiasis, acute respiratory infections, sepsis neonatorum, leprosy, TB, HIV, rabies, community acquired pathogens, hospital acquired pathogens and networking for infectious diseases. There will also be laboratory orientation in virology, bactriology and parasitology. For inquiries, call 807-2628 to 32 local 801 or local 611 or 235, 809-7599 or e-mail mbongcales@ritm.gov.ph or ealmazan@ritm.gov.ph

Fiorgelato at Food Franchising 2001

FIOGELATO, the pure Italian ice cream, joins Food Franchising 2001 to offer their franchise program to entrepreneurs and franchisees who want to get involved in the ice cream business. Fiorgelato is the original authentic Italian ice cream made from 100-percent pure fresh milk from Italy. Food Franchising 2001 is the Fifth International Food Franchising and Business Systems Exposition that will be held from Sept. 5 to 8 at the World Trade Center, Metro Manila. It is organized by Trade Information Marketing and Exhibitions Inc. Call 834-0085 to 86; fax 831-3828 or e-mail time@skyinet.net

Medical oncology convention

THE PHILIPPINE Society of Medical Oncology shall be holding its 15th annual convention from Sept. 6 to 8 at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel. The focus of this year's convention is Gastrointestinal Cancer. The PSMO has invited foreign speakers including Dr. George Fisher of Stanford University Hospital; Drs. Eileen O'Reilly and Henry Yeung of the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center of New York; Dr. Raymund Liang of Queen Mary Hospital of Hong Kong and Dr. Christopher Willett of the Massachusetts General Hospital. For particulars, call Erlyn at 721-9326 or 723-0101 local 5318 or e-mail psmo-sec@pacific.net.ph. A lay forum shall be held on Sept. 8 from 9 to 11:30 a.m.

Anti-money laundering symposium

THE FINANCIAL Executives Institute of the Philippines (Finex), through its professional development committee, is inviting the general public to attend a symposium titled "Anti-Money Launderiing Bill" which will be held today, Sept. 5, 2 to 5 p.m. at the Quezon B&C, Makati Shangri-La Hotel, in cooperation with Citibank, N.A., Security Bank Corp., Union Bank of the Phils. and Agile. For inquiries, call the Finex Secretariat (Sylvia M. Refuerzo) at 811-4052, 811-4184 and 811-4186 or e-mail finexorg@yahoo.com

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TRINIDAD ARREZA AGAY

PNU Financial Management Director

Peacefully joined her Creator on 4 September 2001 at the age of 58.

Her bereaved parents **Vedasto** (†) and **Carecia Agay**; brothers and sisters **Mildred**, **Felix**, **Milagros**, **Teresita** and **Minsur**; brother-in-law **Arles Olalia**; sisters-in-law **Imelda Trinidad** and **Agnes Rodriguez**; nephews and nieces **Ryan**, **Paul**, **Dustin**, **Aila**, **Boom**, **Tata**, **Miggy**, **Jenna**, **Karen**, **Pipoy** and **Honey**; other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City and will be transferred to the Philippine Normal University Chapel, Taft Avenue, Manila on Friday morning, September 7, 2001.

Interment will be on Sunday, September 9, 2001 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 8:00 a.m. Holy Mass.

†

GEORGE T. RODRIGUEZ

Peacefully joined our Creator on September 1, 2001
at the age of 32 in Secaucus, New Jersey.

His loving wife **MILLET**; daughter **ANDREA**; parents **DR. FELIPE** and **MRS. FRANCISCA RODRIGUEZ**; brothers and sisters **VINCENT** (†) and **MARIE**, **MICHAEL** and **PATTY**, **JOJO** and **BRENDA**, **RAYMOND** and **FELICIA**, **MIKE** and **ELLEN**; nephews, nieces, friends and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal rest of his soul.

Interment will be held on Saturday, September 8, 2001in Albany, New York.

Novena prayers will be conducted daily from September 3-11 after the 6:00 p.m. Mass at the main church of the Santuario de San Antonio Parish,
McKinley Road, Makati.

AGAPITO G. TAGAYSAY

March 16, 1911 - September 4, 2001

Peacefully joined his Creator after a full life of 90 years.

His loving children **Hector** and **Armine**, **Ma. Zona**, **Josefa**, **Carmelita** and **Reynaldo Geronimo**; grandchildren **Patricia Ann** and **Alfonso**, **Rachel Christine** and **Sarah Kathryn Geronimo**; great-granddaughter **Ma. Angela Beatriz Geronimo**, request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Greenmeadows Chapel in Libis, Quezon City. Masses are held nightly at 8:00 PM.

Interment will be on Saturday, September 8, 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park in Parañaque City, right after the 9:00 a.m. requiem at the Greenmeadows Church.

In lieu of flowers, we would appreciate a gift to "Missionaries of Charity's Tahanan" (Mother Teresa's home for abandoned elderly).

"I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are Yours."

John 17:9

In Loving Memory
On the First Death Anniversary of

Evelyn Domingo-Macalalad

Who joined her Creator on September 5, 2000.

Holy Masses will be offered for her at the following churches:

1. **STO. DOMINGO CHURCH** .... 6:00 PM
   Quezon Avenue, Quezon City
2. **STO. NIÑO CHURCH** .... 6:00 PM
   Bagobantay, Quezon City
3. **SAN NICOLAS DE TOLENTINO PARISH** .... 6:00 PM
   Carmel 111 Tandang Sora, Quezon City
4. **ST. PAUL PARISH** .... 6:00 PM
   Timog corner Scout Santiago, Quezon
5. **STA. MARIA DELA ESTRADA CHURCH** .... 6:00 PM
   Katipunan Road, Quezon City
6. **OUR LADY OF ANNUNCIATION PARISH** .... 6:00 PM
   Mindanao Avenue, Quezon City
7. **ATENEO PARISH CHURCH** .... 6:00 PM
   Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City

The family request the pious readers, relatives and friends to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Holy Mass will be offered for her today, September 5, 2001 at Family Residence at No. 7 Science Street, Victoria Subdivision, Mindanao Avenue at 7:00 PM.

ENGR. FRANCISCO A. MADRIÑAN, SR.

Peacefully joined his Creator on September 1, 2001

His bereaved wife **Consolacion Ocampo**; children **Nestor & Dalia**, **Wilfredo & Edna**, **Francisco, Jr. & Adelaida**, **Ernesto**, **Tomas**, **Paulino**, **Enrico & Daisy**; sister **Rita**; grandchildren, nephews, nieces, other relatives & friends request pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at home, 106 San Fernando Extension,
Marquez Subd., Lucena City.

Holy Mass will be offered at St. Ferdinand Cathedral
on Sunday, September 9, 2001 at 2:00 p.m.

Interment will follow at St. Ferdinand Cemetery at 3:00 p.m.,
Divine Mercy Hour.

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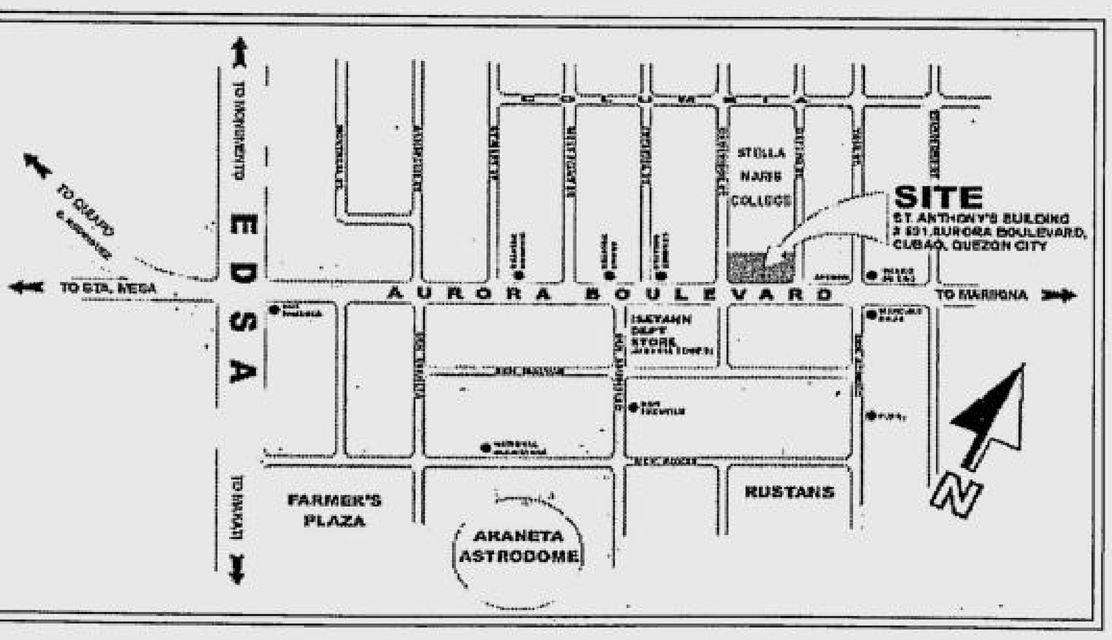

Our Dearly Beloved

Anatolia O. Hernandez

Peacefully joined our Lord on September 4, 2001
at the age of 73.

Her bereaved son **Alexander** and daughter **Ana Marie**; nieces, nephews, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Welington Funeral Services, General Luna Street, Paco, Manila.

Interment will be announced later.

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HP buys Compaq Computer in $25-B deal

SAN FRANCISCO—Hewlett-Packard Co. has agreed to buy Compaq Computer Corp. for some $25 billion in stock, as the two computer industry giants seek to compete amid cut-throat pricing and a downturn in sales.

The combined company will have revenues of $87.4 billion, rivaling industry leader IBM Corp. after the merger, which is expected to generate cost savings of $2.5 billion by the middle of fiscal 2004, the companies said.

Palo Alto-based HP would own 64 percent of the combined company and Compaq would own 36 percent. HP chair and chief executive Carly Fiorina would be chair and chief executive of the combined company, with Compaq chief executive Michael Capellas becoming president.

The companies expect the deal to close in the first half of 2002 and project the transaction will add to HP's pro forma earnings per share in the first full year of combined operations.

Both companies have adopted shareholders rights plans in conjunction with the deal—the kind of action usually taken to ward off an unwanted, outside bid—and say details will be filed with securities regulators.

Under the terms of the merger, Compaq shareholders will receive 0.6325 shares of HP for each share owned. That values Houston-based Compaq at $14.68 a share, a nearly 19-percent premium to its closing price of $12.35 on Friday.

Shares were not traded on Monday, the Labor Day holiday in the United States, and the after-hours Instinet system did not show updated prices for Compaq or HP, a Dow component, on Monday in Asian trading hours.

"At a particularly challenging time for the IT industry, this combination vaults us into a leadership role with customers and partners. Together, we will shape the industry for years to come," said Fiorina, who became CEO of HP in 1999 and has presided over its recent restructuring.

The combined company would create a more formidable competitor for Sun Microsystems and IBM in the market for corporate servers and a bigger player in the market for personal computers for rivals such as Dell Computer Corp and Gateway Inc.

In a statement, the companies said the merger would create the largest player in terms of sales of servers, and PCs and handheld devices taken together, with a leading position in consulting services, storage and management software.

The merger comes amid a sharp downturn in sales of personal computers and a sharp retrenchment in corporate spending on information technology after the boom of the late 1990s.

The merged company would have operations in 160 countries and more than 145,000 employees.

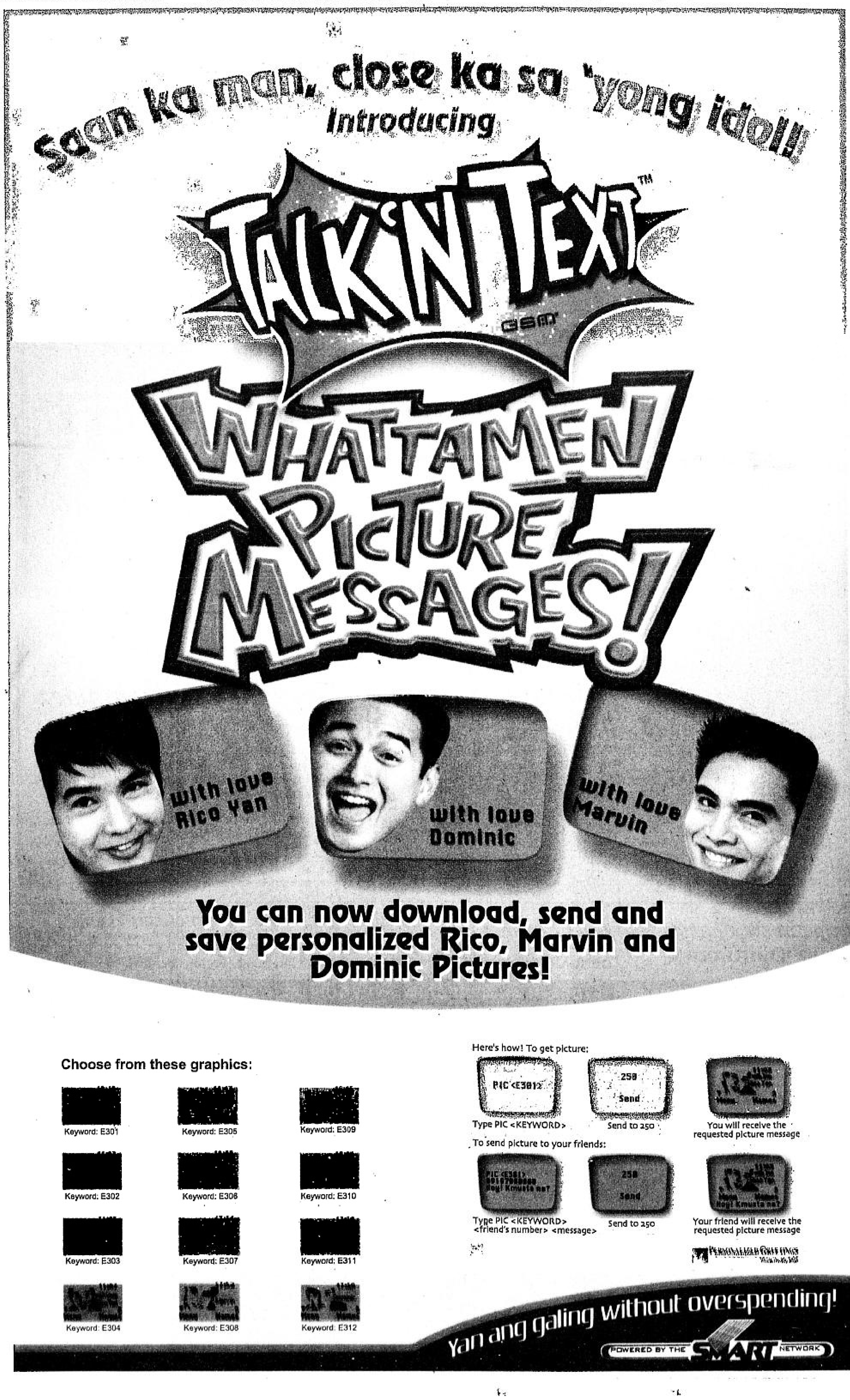
HP spokesperson Rebecca Robboy could not comment on job cuts after the merger but said executives would provide more during a public conference call on Tuesday morning.

The merged company would be based in Palo Alto and operations in Houston would focus on engineering and product development, the companies said.

HP expects annual savings of near $2 billion in the first full year of combined operations from consolidating administration, sales, research and marketing, reducing the cost of goods purchased and selling more servers and PCs directly, Robboy said. *Reuters*

HEWLETT-Packard Co. chair, president and chief executive Carly Florina laughs during a news conference at HP offices in Cupertino, California, in this June 6, 2001, file photo. Hewlett-Packard is buying fellow computer maker Compaq Computer Corp. for an estimated $25 billion in stock, a deal meant to bolster two companies that have been saddled with sagging profits and massive job cuts, according to reports.

AP



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Singapore growth seen plunging

SINGAPORE—Singapore's gross domestic product is likely to plunge into negative territory this year but looks set to rebound in 2002, according to survey results published Tuesday.

A quarterly poll of 29 professional forecasters by the Monetary Authority of Singapore, the de facto central bank, produced a median forecast of minus 0.6 percent GDP growth in 2001, followed by a 4.8-percent growth in 2002.

The government's latest official forecast is for a 0.5- to 1.5-percent growth in 2001, which many economists now find a bit too optimistic following the 0.9-percent contraction in the second quarter from a year ago.

The MAS survey covers professional economists from banks, securities houses and research institutions.

After growing by a stunning 9.9 percent last year, Singapore's economy has gone into reverse due to slack global demand for electronics exports and the slowdowns in the United States and other key markets.

The latest MAS survey produced a wide range of 2001 growth forecasts, from a fall of 4.4 percent to a rise of 1.8 percent.

For 2002, the forecast range was for growth of 2.2 to 6.8 percent.

But MAS said the respondents "also highlighted further downside risks to the recovery process, including the possibility of Japanese yen depreciation and weak economic conditions in Europe."

The respondents attached an average probability of 52 percent that GDP growth would fall below zero this year in Singapore.

The survey said almost all respondents expected the weakness in external demand to result in a further decline in GDP in the third quarter.

The economists polled did not expect recently introduced special off-budget measures to provide much support to domestic economic activity. *AFP*

FOREIGN BRIEFS

Telecoms need to spur demand

SINGAPORE—Asia's telecommunications operators have to be more aggressive than ever if they are to ride out the malaise now afflicting the industry, a regional analyst with research group Gartner said Tuesday.

The sector is suffering from a regional economic downturn, lack of high-impact innovation and a slowdown in Internet and cellular subscriber growth, according to Bertrand Bidaud, Gartner regional director for telecommunications research.

Unlike the halcyon 1990s, when the region's telecommunications sector was driven by the explosive growth in demand for cellular and other services, operators now have to do more to spur demand, according to Bidaud.

"I think they are not aggressive enough to be very honest," Bidaud told AFP after delivering a regional outlook report on the sector. *AFP*

Tycoons to face tax trial

SEOUL—South Korean prosecutors on Tuesday wrapped up judicial procedures to bring to trial three media tycoons facing charges of tax evasion and embezzlement.

The Seoul District Prosecutors Office formally indicted Bang Sang-Hoon, president of Chosun Ilbo, South Korea's biggest newspaper; Kim Byung-Kwan, joint owner of Dong-A Ilbo and Cho Hee-Joon, who controls the Kukmin Daily.

The three have been in detention since Aug. 17. All could face prison terms and heavy fines if found guilty. A trial could take two more months to organize. *AFP*

NTT plans faster phones

TOKYO—Japan's top mobile carrier NTT DoCoMo said Monday it expected to offer the world's first supercharged cell phone service that would work as a videophone and zips information up to 40 times the speed of current phones.

NTT DoCoMo will be the first in the world to offer the technology known as third generation, or 3G, as a commercial service on Oct. 1. In the beginning, the service will be limited to the Tokyo and nearby Yokohama area. *AP*

Siemens expands network

SHANGHAI, China—China's leading GSM mobile operators, China Mobile Communications Corp. and China United Telecommunications Corp., have again commissioned the Siemens Information and Communication Mobile Group to expand their mobile networks.

Siemens will expand CMCC's GSM networks in Shanghai and Inner Mongolia. China Unicom has commissioned IC Mobile to expand its GSM networks in Shanghai, Fujian, Wuhan, Guizhou and Qinghai.

Both orders are worth $196 million.

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PEOPLE at WORK

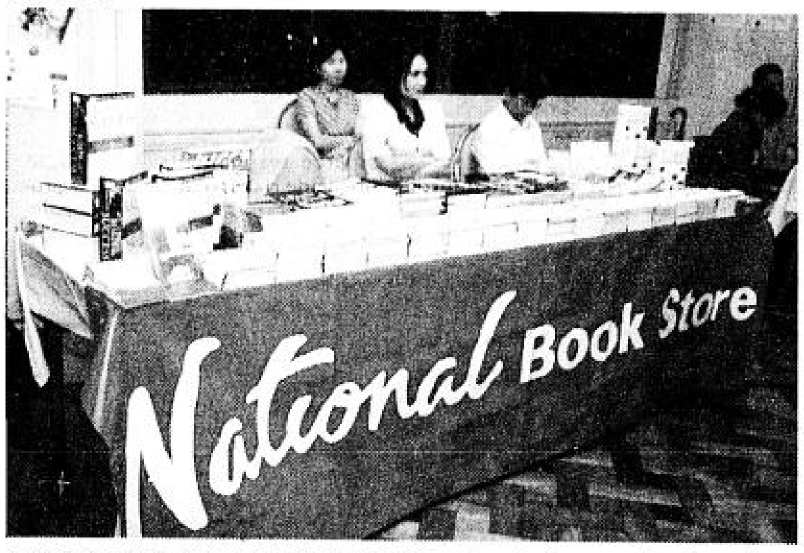
RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor ■ REGINA GALANG REYES, Subsection Editor

Working people take charge of own learning

PHOTOS BY MIKE ALQUINTO

PEOPLE AT WORK LIVE! LEARNING FESTIVAL
The thirst for knowledge drives the workforce to attend the three-day learning festival of the People at Work Live! Seminar Series held at the Makati Sports Club.

THE INSULAR Life staff. From left are Pamela Donato, Eduard Mamucod, Candy Zara, Joanna Borra, Leilani Sun and Maricel Borsoto.



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LEARNERS listen intently to lecture on communication styles.

BY ROCHELLE LEONOR

PEOPLE at work took charge of their own learning path by flocking to the second run of the People at Work Live! Seminar Series held last August 28 to 30 at the Makati Sports Club. Over 1,500 working professionals attended the three-day learning festival.

Conceptualized sas a high value but low cost learning opportunity, the seminar series, which is the "live" version of the People at Work section, is a service of the Philippine Daily Inquirer to its readers to help them in their personal and professional development.

People at Work editor Regina Reyes pointed out in her welcome address that "With our economy still having a hard time pulling itself up, learning opportunities for people at work have become less accessible as companies cut back on training programs. But learning is one item that shouldn't be cut back, it is crucial to our survival and growth. But what does one do in the face of these challenging times? I believe that during these times—and especially in these times—we should all take charge of our own learning. We must hold our careers and lives firmly in our hands because no one else will."

The seminar series supports the concept of continuous learning, a concept most enthusiastically propagated nowadays by organizations that want to be "learning organizations." Reyes noted that, "In this fast-paced and fast-changing brave new world today, learning organizations and learners have been found to have the competitive edge to succeed."

The learning festival kicked off with Recipes for Learning columnist Moje Ramos Aquino's seminar on "Assertiveness in Communication." Aquino described an effective communication style and discussed the differences of being submissive, assertive and aggressive.

On the second day, People at Work contributor Ernie Cecilia conducted a seminar on "Effective Negotiating Skills." Cecilia illustrated its practical applications in life. He also discussed the strategies and tactics one can employ when negotiating.

On the last day of the seminar series, Advice for the Anxious Person at Work columnist Tita Datu Puangco gave a talk on "Achieving Your Personal Vision in Troubled Times." A very timely topic, Puangco stressed the importance of having a personal vision. This, she said, is instrumental in a person's endeavor whether pursuing a dream job or starting a business. She also discussed ways on how to start an entrepreneurial venture.

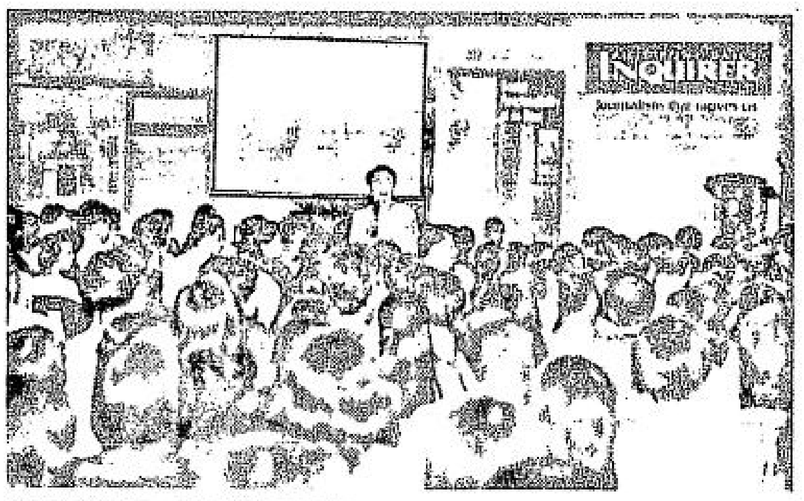
The various sponsors, namely, INQUIRER's Job Market, Insular Life Assurance Company Ltd., National Book Store, Globe Telecom, Audio Visual Driver International (Phils.) Inc., Makati (Sports) Club and Citibank put up exhibit booths at the seminar venue, raffled off prizes and presented their products and services to the participants.

INQUIRER president Alexandra Prieto Romualdez and SVP for Sales and Marketing Rene Reinoso graced the opening day activities.

INQUIRER HRD Head Chito San Mateo emcees the first day seminar.

SPONSOR AV Driver's Roanne Lim and Wilfred Lim at their Shangri-la Edsa Plaza Mall showroom

INQUIRER SVP for Sales and Marketing, Rene Reinoso (third from right), with the Job Market team



AQUINO in a sea of learners

PHOTO BY ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

PEOPLE AT WORK SUPPORTERS
Seated from left are Letty Cid, National Book Store; Ronaldo Limbo, Ramon Salazar and Virginia Ibalio, Makati Sports Club. Standing from left are PaW editor Regina Reyes; PaW writer Rochelle Leonor; INQUIRER president Sandy Prieto Romualdez; resource persons, Ernie Cecilia, Moje Ramos Aquino, Tita Datu Puangco; Optimus Managers and Advisors president Juan "Babs" Reyes; Lulu Diaz and Mirasol Cabuhat of INQUIRER Marketing.

BRILLIANT STRATEGY

Employees get free PCs, cheap Internet access

BY JEFF WESTOVER

(This is Part II of the five-part article on "What the Internet means to anyone who wants to stay employed.")

LAST February 2000, two major companies—Ford Motors and Delta Airlines—announced new programs where employees would receive free computers and cheap Internet access. The companies were quick to pat themselves on the back for their generosity and they were generally heralded in the press for their seeming goodwill.

But what looks like another perk to make workers happy in a tight labor market to some is merely savvy positioning and a cunning strategy to others. Ford's $300 million investment was viewed by some as a move to bring the Internet to a blue-collar workforce. But Ford's average worker makes nearly $45,000 per year—about the norm for most Internet users.

Ford's plan will obviously build computer and Internet skills in their workforce. In a tight labor market where these skills are increasingly in demand, it is simply cheaper to grow the talent than to go out and hire it.

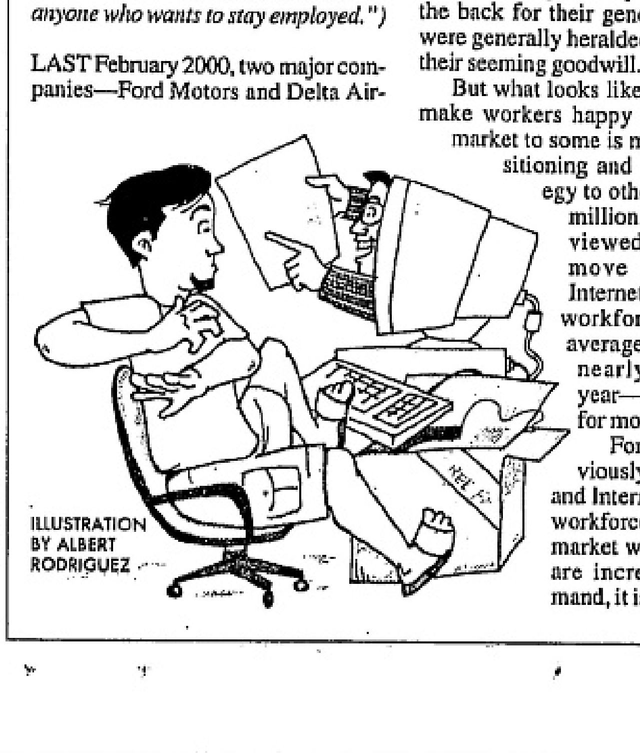


ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

On the conspiracy end of things, the benefit of PC's and Internet access to the employee serves companies like no other employee benefit program can. It provides access through a company Internet start page, where the company can place news and information in front of employees in ways that it deems beneficial. By providing the access and using the "company portal," Ford also has a bird's-eye view into the attitudes and surfing habits of their employees. Indeed, as more and more of life and the records kept to support it shift online, companies will have access about people like they never have had before.

Easy access

One of the greatest battles of the Internet is about to be waged as free access to the Internet gains strength. The move of free computers and access to employees by Ford and Delta is but a ripple in the big pond of free access offers the surfing public will soon see. In Europe, free access has been a staple for over a year. Here in the Colonies, companies like Netzero are quickly gaining members and financial backing as they hand out free Internet access like candy. It's not about marketing to the whims of those with credit cards and disposable income online anymore. It's about getting as many people online as possible and peering through the portals of those that provide it for free.

Why? Because life—and business—moves on Internet time.

Widespread use

Most professionals have taken to the Internet in a big way. Healtheon Corp. surveyed doctors in 1999 and found that 85 percent use the Internet and as much as 33 percent of those use email to communicate with patients.

Teachers are making use of the Internet at home and on the job. A full 50 percent of them say that access to the web in the classroom is essential. Lawyers, accountants, journalists, real estate professionals and recruiters all use the Internet extensively to do their work. In fact, it is difficult to find an industry not making use of the Internet in some way.

The Internet is the fastest spreading technology in history. The telephone, the television and even the computer cannot lay claim to that. It took the telephone 38 years to penetrate just 30 percent of all homes. The computer took 13 years to reach that level. The Internet did it in just 7 years. And now, when ten-year-olds can reminisce about the good old days without the Internet—more than 34 million homes are using the Internet 65 million hours per day.

Internet's benefits

Not only do companies give away computers and Internet access these days: they put as much online as they can to promote all they do to benefit workers.

Employers are using the Internet to better manage workers and to offer them benefits that were previously unavailable. Companies like Microsoft, Nordstrom and 3M give employees online access to "emerchants" that provide special discounts and shopping privileges. Companies can purchase these employee discount plans in much the same way that they shop for healthcare. These companies reportedly allow for reasonable use of the Internet to shop on company computer systems. The rationale is that productivity for the company improves when employees are allowed to benefit from the convenience and speed of technology in their personal lives.

Traditional benefits are managed online too. Employers are using the Internet to administer healthcare benefits and 401k accounts. The online environment is a natural location for organizing complex volumes of information. Employees can access and make changes to their benefits with less paperwork and less hassle than traditional processes. (Wait a minute—are benefits administration personnel losing their jobs because of this?)

Companies are using the Internet to give employees flexibility in scheduling and workload. Since the Internet never sleeps, some employers are allowing creative [illegible] arrangements—an attractive idea for the single parent, part time worker or student.

(Reprinted with permission from www.careermag.com.)

HOME LOAN

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P1,000,000

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Whether you are looking for a new home loan or simply searching for a better deal on your existing home loan, come to HSBC's Home Loan Madness Day on Saturday, 8 September 2001, and find out how you can save the maddest amounts of money! Now, you have two locations to choose from, pick the one closest to you: the new HSBC Savings Bank Greenhills branch and the HSBC Quezon City branch. HSBC's Home Loan Advisors will be there – just for that day – to provide you with free advice on your home loan. You have nothing to lose. Let them show you how you can significantly reduce your interest payments using our Advanced Home Loan Simulator. Allow them to tailor a home loan* that's perfectly suited for your needs and your budget. Enjoy free food, entertainment and parking as well. Call 878-5151 now to find out more about the Home Loan Madness Day. A lifetime's worth of savings can be yours.

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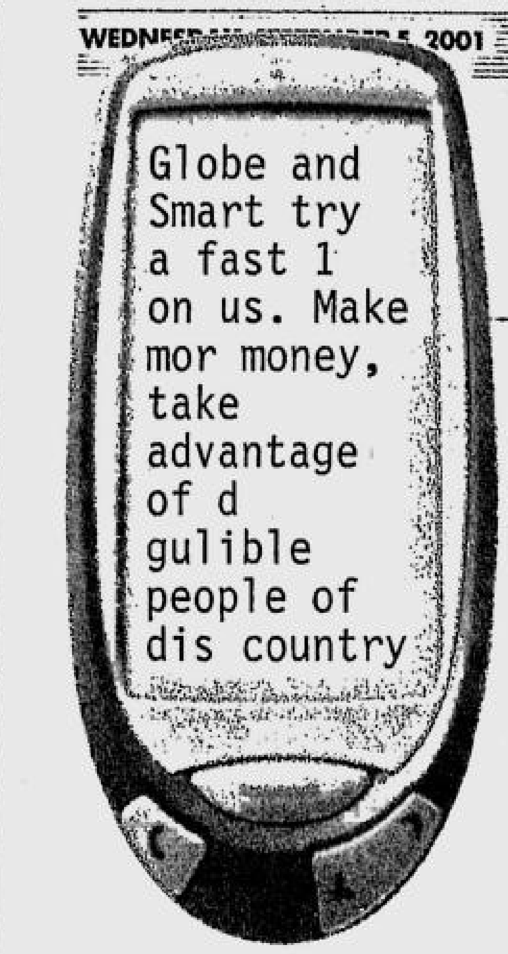

Globe and Smart try a fast 1 on us. Make mor money, take advantage of d gulible people of dis country

Txtrs of d wrld, unyt!

(Letter on page C2)

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WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS

FAMILY FUN WEEKENDS III
MAGIC SHOWS
Enjoy a magical afternoon at the Robinsons Malls! Have a blast with our clown-magician and his team of jugglers, acrobats and balloon sculptors.

Sept. 8, Saturday, 4PM
Activity Area
Robinsons Town Mall
Los Baños

Sept. 9, Sunday, 4PM
Food Court
Robinsons Place Imus

ROBINSONS Malls
visit us at www.robinsonsland.com

movies parties events shops

GENTXT gigguide

07-08
A Song of Peace
A Thanksgiving Dinner Show

A heartwarming concert featuring Baguio City's top bands and musical artists: Free entrance with dinner to all GENTXTers who come in from 7-8 PM.

Time:	7:30 PM
Venue:	Pilgrim's Café Restaurant and Piano Bar, Baguio

10
"Enemy at the Gates"
ADVANCED SCREENING
(In cooperation with Citilite 88.3FM)

Jude Law and Joseph Fiennes star in this tale of two military snipers locked in a deadly game of hide-and-seek. Lucky GENTXTers who drop by the GENTXT booth in Glorietta 4 Cinema lobby from September 5 - 8 can each get a pair of tickets.*

Time:	7:00 PM
Venue:	Shangri-La Plaza Cinema

13
Crossover Live with Gary V.

Mr. Pure Energy rocks the Mandarin Oriental Hotel on this very exclusive night!

Time:	8:00 PM
Venue:	Mandarin Oriental Hotel

Grand Opening of PIER ONE at The Fort

Join us for the opening of this unique theme restaurant. GENTXTers who come in between 9-11 PM get a FREE special drink!

Time:	9:00 PM
Venue:	Pier One Bar & Grill, The Fort Square

14
Wolfgang Live!

Howl the night away and rock with Wolfgang! Lucky GENTXTers who drop by the GENTXT booth in Glorietta 4 Cinema lobby from September 5 - 8 can each get a pair of tickets to this rockin' show.*
Plus, enjoy 50% off on ₱700 and ₱1,000 priced tickets at Ticketworld Outlets on September 7.

Time:	8:00 PM
Venue:	OnStage, Greenbelt Mall

Pido with Take One, back to back with Tribe of Levi

Dance to the beat of Pido with Take One, followed by Tribe of Levi! GENTXTers who come in from 9-11 PM get free entrance and a special appetizer

Time:	9:00 PM
Venue:	Hard Rock Café, Glorietta 3

15
POW3 (Party On Weekends)
(In cooperation with MAGIC 89.9FM)

Strut your stuff in this dance party/contest/live music fest! Lucky GENTXTers who drop by the GENTXT booth in Glorietta 4 Cinema lobby from September 5 - 8 can each get a pair of tickets.*

Time:	4:00 PM - 12:00 MN
Venue:	Limits Disco, Robinsons Galleria

15
GENTXT Movie Night: "A Knight's Tale"

A special GENTXTer-only event! Heath Ledger puts on some heavy metal in this contemporary take on classic chivalry. Lucky GENTXTers who drop by the GENTXT booth in Glorietta 4 Cinema lobby from September 5 - 8 can each get a pair of tickets to this exclusive screening.*

Time:	7:30 PM
Venue:	Glorietta 4, Cinema 3 THX

26
Lite `N Live Party
(In cooperation with K-Lite)

Lucky GENTXTers who drop by the GENTXT booth in Glorietta 4 Cinema lobby from September 5 - 8 can each get a pair of tickets to this groovy event of live music.*

Time:	9:00 PM
Venue:	Dish, Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center

Nite Live
(In cooperation with MAGIC 89.9FM)

Lucky GENTXTers who drop by the GENTXT booth in Glorietta 4 Cinema lobby from September 5 - 8 can each get a pair of tickets to this music-infused evening.*

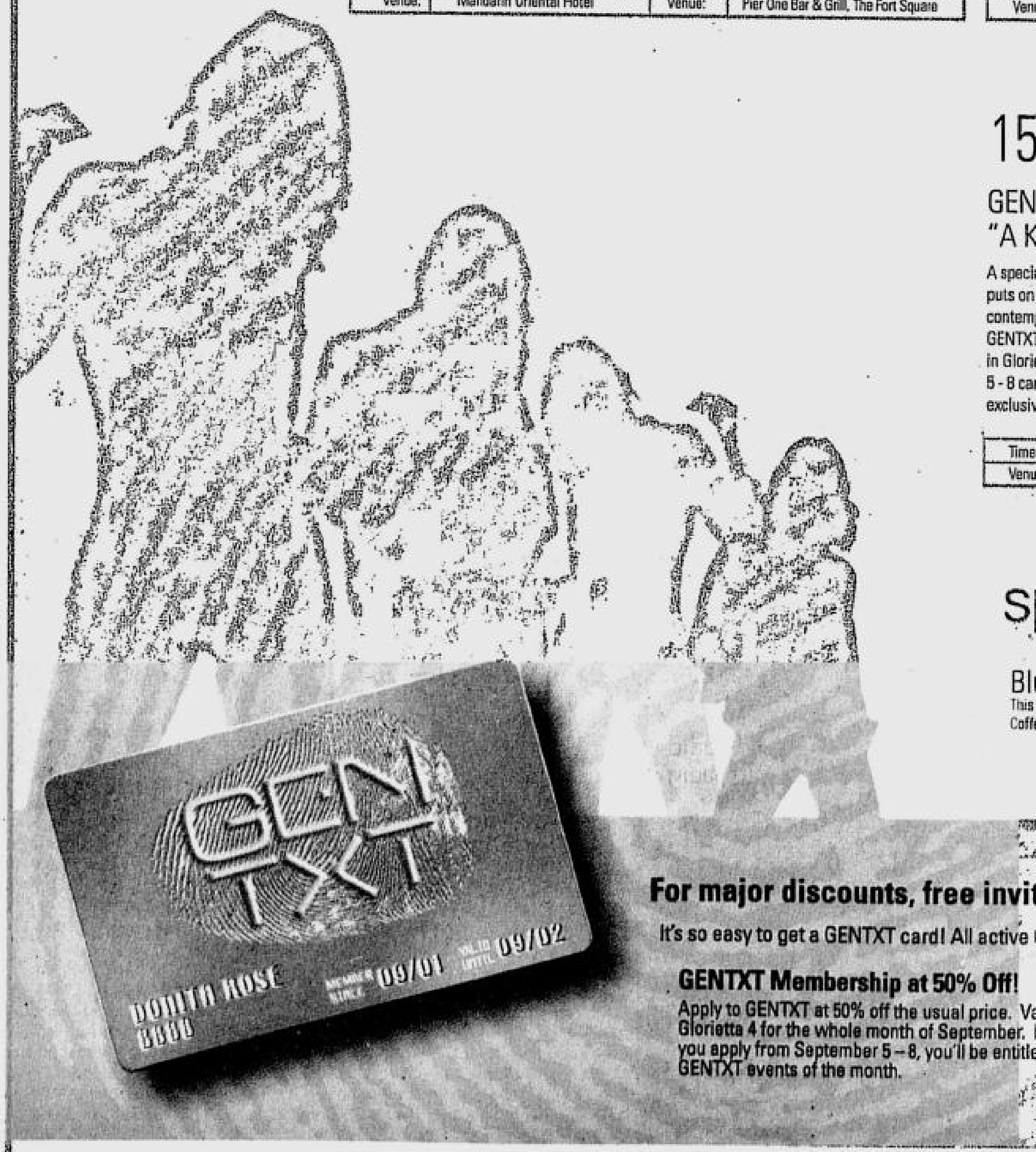
Time:	9:00 PM
Venue:	Nth Degree, Malate

specialoffers

Blugré Coffee (Davao)
This month, flash your GENTXT card for a free Special Durian Gatchpuccino, Coffee with Durian!

GENTXT Limited Edition CD
Refer a friend to apply to GENTXT and take home a Limited Edition GENTXT CD. Valid only this month at the GENTXT booth in Glorietta 4 Cinema lobby.

* Bring GENTXT card and valid ID with photo.



For major discounts, free invites, and exclusive events and privileges, GENTXT is all you'll ever need.

It's so easy to get a GENTXT card! All active Globe Handyphone Plan and Prepaid Plus subscribers between 18 and 29 years old are eligible to get the card.

GENTXT Membership at 50% Off!
Apply to GENTXT at 50% off the usual price. Valid only at the GENTXT booth in Glorietta 4 for the whole month of September. No need to bring requirements. If you apply from September 5 – 8, you'll be entitled to claim a free ticket to one of the GENTXT events of the month.

GENTXT Free Renewal!
Renew your GENTXT membership for free! Simply drop by the GENTXT booth at Glorietta 4 Cinema lobby or any Globe Telecom Business Center from now until December 2001.

newpartners

Pier One Bar & Grill
(Metro Manila)
10% off on food & drinks (cash), 5% off on food & drinks (credit card). Free iced tea or dessert with a minimum purchase of ₱500 or free bar chow for a group of three (3) with a GENTXTer.

Burgoo American Bar and Restaurant
(Metro Manila)
Free order of Chimichanga (good for 6) for every party/table with a GENTXTer. 20% off on bar drinks.

Grilla Bar & Grill (Metro Manila)
10% off on food & drinks (cash), 5% off on food & drinks (credit card). Free bottomless iced tea with a minimum food purchase of ₱350.

Macau Restaurant (Metro Manila)
10% off on food and drinks. Free glass of iced tea.

e-2-door
Go shopping on-line! For a purchase of $200 and above, a 20% discount on shipping and handling will be provided. While for purchases below $200, a 10% discount in shipping and handling will prevail.

Lipton Ice Tea
Free bottomless Lipton Ice Tea to all GENTXTers on GENTXT Movie Nights.

essenses (Metro Manila)
Free de-stress massage for a minimum purchase of ₱700.

Globe HANDYPHONE
Hotline: 730-1000/ www.gentxt.com

Per DTI-NCR Permit No.2904 series of 2001

Txtrs of d wrld, unyt!

DIR GLOBE N SMART,

We cant beliv how gulible weve bin. We honestly belivd we were allies, even frnds. Fr d tym we tried 2 convince Mom n Dad 2 buy us d l8est Nokia celfne model 2 d tym we tried 2 defend u fr d idiots hu wantd 2 start censoring our txt msgs, we thought u wer on our side. We stood firm wen plans 2 ban fnes in sch wer made. We stomachd jokes bout accidnts and dwndling skils in spelng bec of our love 4 thumb power. We guarded our fnes fr snatchers lurkng around. N wen sum of our fnes got stolen, we bought new 1s. Txt turnd in2 nece-c-t 4 us. U, after ol, in sum strange way, had given us fridom. Mom and Dad let us go out a lot bec we wer olways, olways jst a txt away. Grp projects n aranging gimiks bcame so much easier, w/ every1 hooked on txt. Sum of us met new frnds, or even significant odrs, via SMS tech. U wer constantly cookng up ingenious ways of keepng our fingers on our keypads. Logos, ringtones, cards, tym 2 chat, virtual pets, virtual frnds, wat els hav we bought fr u?

Free txt

Sudenly charging us P1 per txt msg dat used 2 b free shud hav tipd us off. Den agen, we wer thinkng, it was jst fair. U had 2 earn, after ol. Urs is a business n we r consumers. Bsides, we stl had free txt. In fact, it was d amt of free txt u gave away 2 line subscribers dat 1s agen sent us 2 Mom n Dad pleading n begging 2 sign us up 4 postpaid plans. While sum of dem said yes, a lot sed no. We dcided 2 stik 2 our belovd prepaid cards. We saved up our measly sch allowance, forgetng dat extra order of French fries or watchng dat new movi 2 be able 2 afford another prepaid card. And on mos wen we were jst absoltly financialy chalengd, we setled 4 w8ng 4 our 150 free txt msgs. Dat was @ least sumthng. Roughly 3 msgs per day.

Totally betrayd

And now u want 2 take dat away, making us feel lyk weve bin totaly betrayd. How much, jst how much wil u earn by taking away wat we thnk u owe us, ur loyal consumers? Is dat monetary value equivalent 2 d value of d complete loss of our faith in u as supposd public service compnies? Hav we olways jst bin a market 4 u? Jst statistics n not human beings? If so, u shudnt hav foold us in2 belivng oderwise. U shudnt hav askd ur ad agencies 2 cum up w/ brilliant comercials dat wud tug @ our heartstrings n make us beliv u actually cared. Dat u actually cared abt us being able 2 communicate w/ our parents hu r away or beaus hu r far, or even being able 2 jst constantly b connectd 2 our frnds. U shud hav jst cum up 2 us, held us @ gunpoint n askd us 2 spil d contnts of our walet n almost-empty pockets 2 u.

Good tyms

We actually had sum good tyms 2geder. We rmember Edsa 2 wer we had such a blast makng fun of dat joke of a leader we had. We didnt care if we usd up a prepaid card dat shud hav lastd a month in jst a day bec we wer sendng out msgs 2 aid us in kicking him out. In dose days, our celfnes became mor dan jst tools of communication. Dey became weapons—weapons agenst abuse of power. N now, sadly, u r guilty of d same thng. N in some way, wat u're doing myt even b worse.

During Erap's tym, we knew wat 2 do. We had an Edsa 2 go 2. Wid u, wer do we go? Pioneer? N wat gud wud dat bring us? Wat's anoder alternative? Stop using our fnes altogether? We can't do dat. Dat's d difficult thng. We nid ur service. N u thrive upon dat knowledge. D thought of dat makes u smile n greedily rub ur hands 2geder.

U got us hookd. U knew dis tech wud tickle us pink. Dat everyone—fr our 6-yr-old cuzns 2 our yayas wud soon b toting fnes along. N u wud be getng richer n richer by d min. U reeld us in. N wen u finaly got mst of us hookd, u decide 2 try a fast 1 on us. Make mor money, take advantage of d gulible people of dis country. We wud h8 2 use dis analogy, but u r lyk drug pushers hu turn innocent human beings in2 complete junkies n den leave dem hanging in d air, pleading 4 mercy.

Wrath of d nation

Wid u now being faced w/ d wrath of d nation, u try n cum up w/ d silliest technicalities 2 defend ur greed. We r not foold. Try n ask urself, which is mor impt—d people of dis nation or d tons of money u wil b raking in? We wudnt b surprisd if ur ans turns out 2 be # 2.

We tried 2 ignor d symptoms b4. Sleepng w/ a newly loaded fne n waking up 2 hear dat annoyng voice say, "Ur balance is below P20." Or getng billd 4 calls we didnt make. Dey myt hav been glitchs in d system, thngs dat cudnt b helped. But dis is jst 2 much. Dis is outryt robbery.

It wud hav bin acceptable if 1 of u chose 2 do dis. Dat wud @ least giv us d option of transferng 2 d odr company. But u cudnt alow dat, cud u? Dis is evidently a conspiracy. D giants trampling ol over d litle people.

We can try 2 fil up dis entire paper wid our ranting but wat gud wud dat do? Wat efect wud our words hav wen all u can c is d glint of coins? We wud lyk to beliv we r worth mor dan dat. We r furious. We r mad. N even if our words fall on deaf ears, we can sleep peacefully @ nyt, knowng our principles r intact, knowng dat we r fighting 4 wat is ryt. Sadly, we cant say d same about u.

Signed,
D SUPPOSED TXT GENERATION

At the Children's Wear Department
bossini
Roomy pockets
Reinforced seams
We've got it all for you!
SM DEPARTMENT STORE
MAKATI • CUBAO • HARRISON • NORTH EDSA • STA. MESA • ORTIGAS • LAS PIÑAS • BACOOR • FAIRVIEW • MANILA • ILOILO • CEBU

She's experiencing multiple personality disorder

Carlos Garchitorena & September Mahino

DEAR Caloy and Sep,

I am on the borderline of insanity, having a multiple personality disorder. This is giving me such a hassle, especially when it comes to performance in my classes, my work ethic and my family relationships. My friends don't really understand me, and boyfriends come and go. I've always been the bohemian type but I feel like I should have a greater impact on the world before I say hello to the netherworld, which I think I have already glimpsed during my darker days. What can I do to fulfill my basic desires?

SALLYJESSERAPHAEL

I'm not sure if you get your kicks out of writing to advice columns but I'm going to give you the benefit of the doubt. Let us say that your situation is real, that you've really had a glimpse of what it would be like in Hades' world and that you [think you] have a multiple personality disorder. (By the way, if I remember my Psych 101 right, borderline insanity is the worst case of personality disorder there is, worse than the multiple personality disorder. Meaning, those two disorders are different. Anyway, I'm not really sure about this so better do your own research.) Don't you think it would be best for you to get professional help? If your psychological problems are creating troubles in your life (like they normally do), don't let them suck you further into dementia and disorder. Get a shrink to get your head straight. It would also be better if you lay off drugs for good. And if you've never taken drugs, well, good for you. Keep it up.

As for your wish of making a greater impact on the world before you die, who said that being a peaceful boho-chick/guy prevents you from doing that? You don't have to be competitive and ruthless just to give significance to your life. You only have to have some amount of self-knowledge, a bit of ambition and a little less laziness.

SEP

Sep is on to something when she says that you should seek professional help. But don't worry, a lot of people need professional help in one form or the other. Maybe it's just a phase. It always is.

The key to your problem is teamwork. There's no "id" in team. You have got to pass the ball around to all the guys, some of the time. Like a coach. Like a parent to three children, you have to take on the role of juggler of attention toward your other personalities, the little rascals in you, as it were.

Kids today, though, huh? They seem to have a switch in them that reads "anti-everything" that turns them into wormholes into some really dark matter.

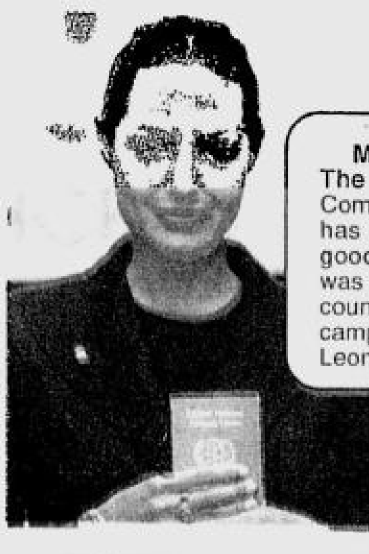
So initiate dialogue with your different sides, and work out your schedules between yourselves. Sally gets to use the body from Sundays and early afternoons, Jesse gets to laze around early and late in the day and "be creative," and Raphael can try to be the reconciling link between all the other personalities that are only allowed bursts of insanity and explosive wrath.

Tell the rest of the gang to write, too.

CARLOS

THE 2BU! THERMOMETER

Ambassador Lara Croft, beautiful Jay Hernandez and tragic Aaliyah



Move over, Lara Croft. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has named Angelina Jolie goodwill ambassador. She was teary-eyed when she recounted her visits to refugee camps Pakistan and Sierra Leone in BBC.

MTV Video Music Awards. 2bU!'s pick? Fatboy Slim's "Weapon of Choice."

FWD and Chalk. Congratulations to magazines that recently turned 1. We are looking forward to more good issues.

VJ hunt. Will Lili finally be axed?

Michael Schumacher wins the 2001 Formula One championship.

Wolfgang. New album, same sound. Evolve, people, evolve.

UAAP Board and the Mark Cardona eligibility issue. 2.3 years is not 3 years.

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

"Shrek." Those who shun kiddie movies should think twice. "Shrek" is hilarious, fun and definitely worth watching, wrinkles or no wrinkles.

Book sales. Finally, it's that time of the year again when publishers and book distributors hold the Philippine Bookfair and National Bookstore holds its "cut-price" sale. Good titles for even better prices—you still have more than a week to hit the shops.

"Crazy/Beautiful." A not-so-good teen flick, but Jay Hernandez makes it worth watching.

Free text reduction. We demand an explanation.

The death of Aaliyah. "We were given a queen, we were given an angel."

New website's catchy graphics, utilities

YAHOO-ITIS. The tendency of most websites to look like Yahoo.

A2Zphilippines.NET. A new website as far as removed from the Yahoo look as night from day.

(Though it isn't officially open yet, A2Z is already drawing about 1,500 visitors a week—more than most of its erstwhile competitors with the exception of major news services.)

A2Z is envisioned as an all-purpose reference on matters related to the Philippines. No, it doesn't have news or entertainment sections. What it has is almost everything else—a wide range of utilities, each of them with a good claim to being "best-in-class."

Its countrywide business phone directory really does cover the country, not just Metro Manila. Type a business name in A2Z's Insta-Search Box and you get an answer in 20 seconds or less—much faster and with a lot less trouble than the phonebook. Some 100,000 business and government phones are in A2Z's database. There's the A2Z Calendar Pro, with a calendar, date-calculator and personal agenda with an e-mail reminder system. All of these are rolled into a very neat, user-friendly package, and garnished with a choice of photo galleries to suit almost every taste, from "Skylines" to "Sweet and Sultry." Stressed out at the office? Refresh your spirits with A2Z's Anti-Stress Suite (under its music button), which offers streaming music and nature sounds for the weary: rain, surf, Gregorian chant, Mozart, Baroque.

There are many other utility modules, with something for almost everyone—Atlas (find out who Edsa was!); world clock; EZ recipes; Philippine postcards; search the web; news links and lots more.

LET THE CLASSES BEGIN

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Before 119.75
Now 59.75
CHICCO
Baby Sax
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Permit No 2756 Series of 2001

QUIAPO • MAKATI • CUBAO • HARRISON • NORTH EDSA • STA. MESA • ORTIGAS • LAS PINAS • BACOOR • FAIRVIEW • MANILA • PAMPANGA • ILOILO • CEBU

BPI E-Credit, another first from your BPI Card

BPI MasterCard, your fully charged for value card, has once again taken a big leap in introducing to the market the first and only virtual account known as the BPI E-Credit. A credit card facility that makes online shopping virtually easy. It is a feature designed solely for Internet purchases. No need to worry of Internet hackers for the BPI E-Credit account will be a sub-limit of the BPI MasterCard's regular card limit. This will surely give the consumers their well-deserved peace of mind and the convenience right at their own fingertips.

The BPI E-Credit account will be issued through a reference device with information similar to that of a physical card except that it will not bear the following: a MasterCard hologram, a magnetic stripe, a signature panel and embossing. This will prevent the reference device to get presented for over-the-counter credit card payments.

Online transactions may be transferred to SIP (Special Installment Plan) via the Balance Transfer option. Plus, it also gets to earn Frequent User points. Settlement of e-purchases can be done conveniently with the rest of your BPI MasterCard bills.

What makes the BPI E-Credit Account distinct is that, no other major card issuer has developed such a virtual account in the industry. Although others may claim that they have paved the way for payment gateways, still, BPI Card has managed to go beyond the limits and break the barriers between the physical world and cyberspace shopping with the BPI E-Credit Account.

AT THE launch of the new BPI E-Credit Account (from left): MasterCard country manager Poch Villa-Real; MasterCard VP for marketing Judith Dayrit; BPI Card president Jojo Ocampo, BPI VP Tessie Tan, and BPI SVP Ric de la Torre.

BPI E-Credit Account, only from the Bank of the Philippine Islands, 150 years of innovative banking... 150 years of banking leadership.

Interested customers may call the BPI Expressphone at 89100, fax their enrollment forms at 898-9499 or simply log on to www.bpiexpressonline.com/e-credit.

BPI Credit Cards are fully-charged: the value of experience

WHEN the very first BPI bank began operating in 1851, it carried a singular mission in mind: to not only dedicate themselves to helping Filipino consumers with their present financial needs, but to anticipate their future concerns later on. It didn't take long, though, before such a pro-active approach towards excellence and vigorous service won over the hearts and loyalties of customers nationwide. This close and stable link has done wonders for BPI's growth and maturity, but most of all, has also helped tailor its services to match the growing needs of the Filipino people. And as a result of this experience, BPI offers many services that are aimed squarely at the needs of consumers--one of which are the BPI Credit Cards.

Though unassuming as they might seem, the BPI Express Credit and the BPI MasterCard offer great flexible financial tools that are timely for the economic crisis. The reason behind this is that BPI Credit Cards boast so many features that consumers are given better value for their money and top-notch convenience at the same time

Two credit lines in one card

BPI Credit Cards give you the power of affordability. Both the BPI Express Credit and BPI MasterCard allows you to choose between two credit lines: the regular line for daily purchases, and the BPI Credit Cards exclusive Special Installment Line (S.I.P.) for high-ticket items.

When you use the regular line of payment, you can take advantage of the Deferred Payment Plan. This plan allows you to pay as low as 10 percent of your statement for the BPI Express Card, and 5 percent for the BPI MasterCard, and roll over the balance to your next statement at a low, fixed and non-floating charge.

If you choose to use the S.I.P. line of payment, you can buy expensive items such as appliances, furniture, and jewelry at low interest rates, without having to shell out for a downpayment. Best of all, you get all the time you need in order to pay--from 3 to as much as 24 months!

No surcharge

Do you notice that whenever you have cash, you avoid using your card in order to avoid paying extra for the privilege? Well, when you use your BPI Express Credit or BPI MasterCard, what you see is what you pay' That's because there's absolutely no surcharge when you pay for your groceries, gas and drugstore purchases. You can also enjoy surcharge-free shopping when you pay for appliances at major appliance stores with your BPI Express Credit Card, where the Cash Price is the Card Price!

Low finance charges

Your credit card should make your life easier, not the opposite. With BPI Credit Cards, you

BPI CREDIT/ C5

BPI: catching up with convenience

HAVE you ever noticed how everything today is trending towards the easy? In the never-ending quest for convenience, people have begun either streamlining, eliminating, or downright automating services. It's everywhere: in the vehicles we drive, the appliances we use, and even the company policies we follow. It's all around us, yet when we look at the way we still bank—long bill payments and slow balance inquiries—it's like nothing has changed at all. That's why BPI is continuously updating and improving to bring banking up to speed with the rest of the 21st century.

Balance inquiry

Now we understand that while spending hours looking for that perfect sale item is perfectly acceptable, we believe that spending another second waiting for just a plain balance inquiry is totally unnecessary. You see, after dialing "89-100" and selecting "2" all you have to do is press "1." This will bring you to an automated dialogue that will allow you to find out about your balance without having to wait for a Phonebanker. Just punch in your card number, and voila! You get complete information instantly—your outstanding balance, statement balance, minimum payment required, payment due date, and available balance—without any of the hassle. Best of all, since this service is fully automated, you can inquire about your balance from anywhere, 24 hours a day, and 7 days a week. How's that for convenience?

Pay 24 hours a day/7 days a week from wherever you are!

If you're looking for a way to pay your monthly bills without having to constantly fret about late or forgotten payments, or handle snaking lines at the bank, you don't have to search very far. BPI's convenience payment option allows you to pay your BPI Credit Card bills conveniently, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, regardless of where you are. All a cardholder has to do is submit to a one-time enrolment and it's activated. You can pay as you please, anytime, effortlessly. But that's not all. You get three, not only one, ways of payment, so you can choose which option works best with your lifestyle.

Dial-A-Bill

Instead of having to travel back and forth to pay your bills, why not kick back and let your fingers do the work? Just enroll both your payment account and BPI Cerdit Card, and you're set. With one call via BPI's 89-100—ExpressPhone number using a landline or 89-10000 using a cell phone, your bills will be settled. So before you know it, you'll be ready to relax in no time.

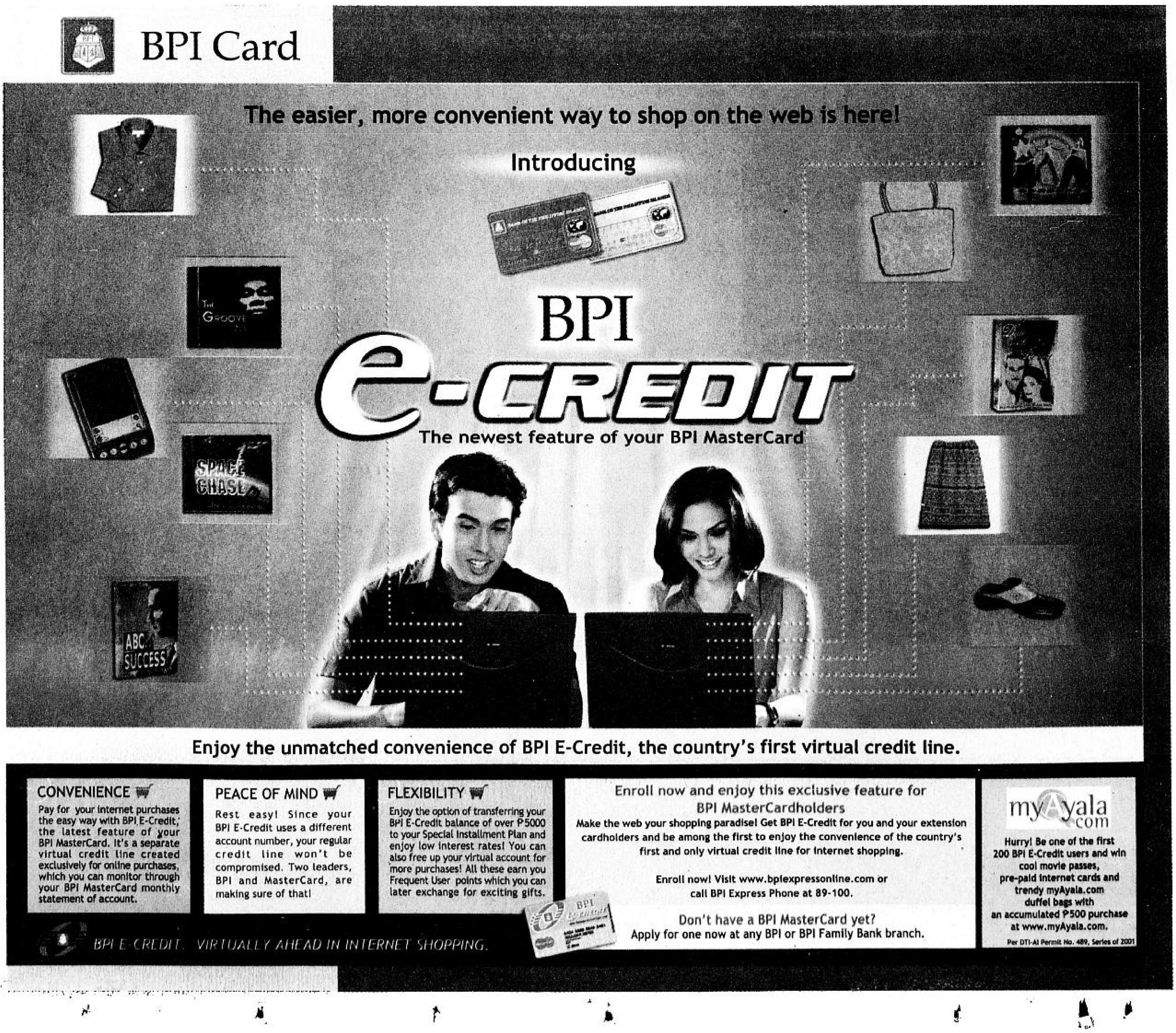
Ease online

No matter where you hide, you'll pay your bills with ease. You don't have to stray from your obligations whenever you travel. Pay your bills at home, the office, the café, or even abroad. Just log on and register at www.bpiexpressonline.com, then click your way to www.expressbills.com, and see and pay your bills cyber-style. You can even check and print your present and previous account statements up to three months back for personal records. And since we're online, there's no longer such a thing as late payments.

Fully automatic

This is the closest thing to having your bills pay for themselves. When you avail of the Auto-Debit option, BPI Card automatically transfers payment from your BPI account every month. Just choose which payment you want BPI to authorize for debit: minimum or full payment. Once enrolled, you can forget completely about paying your bills—no logins or calls. As long as your BPI account has enough balance each month, you can be worry-free all year long.

The world is evolving, searching for better ways to do the same things we've done for decades. Or even better, it's developing new alternatives. Now if this is a turn for the better, or for the worse, no one can surely tell. But for anyone who has had to spend one more second waiting for a line, or another hour standing in one, it's clear BPI's done a great job.



BPI Card

The easier, more convenient way to shop on the web is here!

Introducing

BPI e-CREDIT

The newest feature of your BPI MasterCard

Enjoy the unmatched convenience of BPI E-Credit, the country's first virtual credit line.

CONVENIENCE
Pay for your internet purchases the easy way with BPI E-Credit, the latest feature of your BPI MasterCard. It's a separate virtual credit line created exclusively for online purchases, which you can monitor through your BPI MasterCard monthly statement of account.

PEACE OF MIND
Rest easy! Since your BPI E-Credit uses a different account number, your regular credit line won't be compromised. Two leaders, BPI and MasterCard, are making sure of that!

FLEXIBILITY
Enjoy the option of transferring your BPI E-Credit balance of over ₱5000 to your Special Installment Plan and enjoy low interest rates! You can also free up your virtual account for more purchases! All these earn you Frequent User points which you can later exchange for exciting gifts.

Enroll now and enjoy this exclusive feature for BPI MasterCardholders
Make the web your shopping paradise! Get BPI E-Credit for you and your extension cardholders and be among the first to enjoy the convenience of the country's first and only virtual credit line for Internet shopping.

Enroll now! Visit www.bpiexpressonline.com or call BPI Express Phone at 89-100.

Don't have a BPI MasterCard yet?
Apply for one now at any BPI or BPI Family Bank branch.

myAyala.com
Hurry! Be one of the first 200 BPI E-Credit users and win cool movie passes, pre-paid Internet cards and trendy myAyala.com duffel bags with an accumulated ₱500 purchase at www.myAyala.com.
Per DTI-AI Permit No. 489, Series of 2001

BPI E-CREDIT. VIRTUALLY AHEAD IN INTERNET SHOPPING.

BPI Credit Cards . . . (From page C4)

enjoy an edge in interest computations. That's because the interest on your purchases is computed on the statement date, and not on the posting date. This saves you several days of interest payment per transaction. It may not seem too significant, but just a little still goes a long way.

Fully charged madness

If you have a BPI Express Credit or a BPI MasterCard, you're carrying an exclusive pass to join the biggest collection of installment madnesses held every year. You can purchase high-ticket items at installment, with reduced interest rates through your BPI Credit Card's S.I.P. payment. That includes computers, washing machines, furniture and electronic equipment. But do you know that you can pay for other items and even services at an installment madness? Join the Tuition Installment Plan Plus (TIP+) and easily pay for the tuition, uniform and other school materials of your kids. Need to pay for your next plane ticket in an easy, hassle-free manner? Join the Travel Madness where you can travel now and pay later. Or how about that expensive laser eye surgery you promised grandmother last year? Now you can afford it with the Health, Beauty and Fitness Madness (H.B.F.). With your BPI Credit Cards, it's all within your reach.

BPI E-CREDIT LAUNCHED
The Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) launched the first ever virtual card in the Philippines—the BPI E-Credit, as one of the features of BPI MasterCard. Special tie-up with MyAyala will allow the first 200 E-Credit buyers at MyAyala.com to win exciting giveaways. Present at the contract signing are (seated from left) MasterCard country head Poch Villa-Real, BPI Card president Jojo Ocampo, MyAyala.com chief operating officer Dave Rafael; (standing from left) BPI Card senior product manager Butch Reyes, BPI Card marketing associate Lope Barrera III and MyAyala.com marketing officer Jenny Salmingo.

Makro exclusivity

BPI Cards joined by the country's largest wholesale outlet in giving you discounts and perks exclusive to BPI Express Credit cardholders. So the next time you decide to save by buying in bulk, shop with a BPI Express Credit Card and get even bigger savings!

Free first extension

Sometimes even a mom needs some help with the groceries. If you carry either a BPI Express Credit or a BPI MasterCard, you can get the first extension card for your family and even in-laws-for free!

Cash advance

Anyone can appreciate a little more certainty in their life, especially in this very uncertain time. That's why BPI Express Credit and BPI MasterCard Classic can give you emergency cash when and where you need it. You can get up to 30 percent of your available regular credit limit (or up to P30,000, whichever is lower). You can even have the option to advance up to 100 percent of your available regular credit limit if you carry a BPI MasterCard Gold. You can conveniently avail yourself of this feature from any BPI branch, local ATM network, or over the counter at any Cirrus-accredited bank worldwide.

Free card insurance package

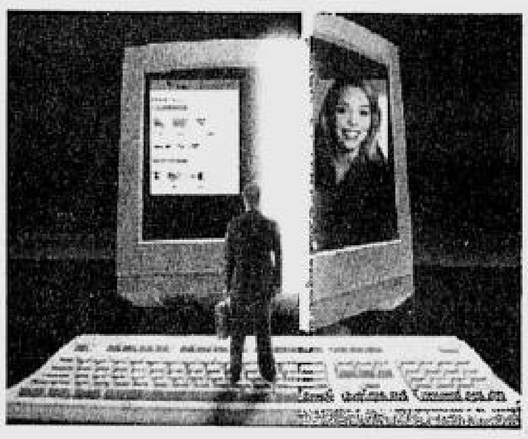
Having nightmares about losing your BPI Credit Card-and the contents of your account? Take it easy with BPI Credit Card's Lost Card Insurance. Enjoy zero liability on the unauthorized use of your lost or stolen card the moment you file a lost card report. Plus, in the case of an accidental loss of life, your latest statement is automatically paid for with BPI's Credit Protect. Also receive a premium package protection and insurance benefits of up to P10 million in Travel Insurance every time you charge your fare with your BPI Credit Card. With your BPI Credit Card at hand, rest assured you're fully covered.

Extensive payment network

Long lines and payment hassles are now a thing of the past when you pay for your BPI Credit Card bills. With BPI's convenience payment options, you are given options to choose from. You can pay through BPI's 89-100 ExpressPhone by simply enrolling your BPI Card once and paying your bills in a single phone call. Also, you have the choice to pay online by registering at www.bpiexpressonline.com and logging on whenever you have to pay. Or if you prefer total peace of mind when it comes to your bills, BPI's Auto Debit feature will automatically transfer your payment from your BPI account every month. Plus, over 900 ATMs nationwide and at BPI and BPI Family Bank branches.

Many years of customer service experience has left BPI with an uncanny feel towards reopening services and features that make banking simpler, easier and a much more pleasant experience for customers. Not surprisingly, BPI has also developed the most versatile line of credit cards, combining both buying power and payment ease in a single feature-filled package. So whenever you go out and use your BPI Credit Card, you can feel confident you've got the advantage of an experienced banking leader behind you.

MasterCard pioneers virtual payment technology



IMAGINE shopping on the web and paying for your purchases with practically no cash or any physical plastic card in your hands. Unthinkable? Think again. MasterCard International has brought the future of virtual payments to the present.

The leading global payments company is currently paving the way for the wide acceptance of virtual payment technology. Its latest innovation, Virtual MasterCard, is the first of its kind – a flexible, convenient and secure new e-commerce payment solution that MasterCard developed to help meet consumer's ever-evolving needs in the virtual world.

"Virtual MasterCard is another addition to the long list of industry firsts that MasterCard has introduced throughout its illustrious history and we at MasterCard International are very pleased to introduce this great innovation in the market today," notes Jose Rene Villa-Real, vice president at MasterCard International. "We are extremely excited about the great prospects of Virtual MasterCard in further revolutionizing, e-commerce, especially in the Philippines."

E-wallet

In essence, Virtual MasterCard offers consumers the option of making remote purchases without the use of a physical card. The Virtual MasterCard Solution enables consumers to shop online in complete control of their payment options. When used in conjunction with an e-wallet, web shoppers can simply enter their Virtual MasterCard information such as name and account number once and store it securely in an "electronic wallet" for all future online shopping. Thus, there would be no need to reach and take out a physical card to make purchase online.

Villa-Real adds: "This is the future of online shopping and MasterCard is delighted to bring it to consumers now."

MasterCard has all consumers covered with this latest program. While Virtual MasterCard provides them payment functionality on the Internet, it can also leverage for mobile commerce, mail/telephone orders, recurring payments and other remote environments.

Card Option

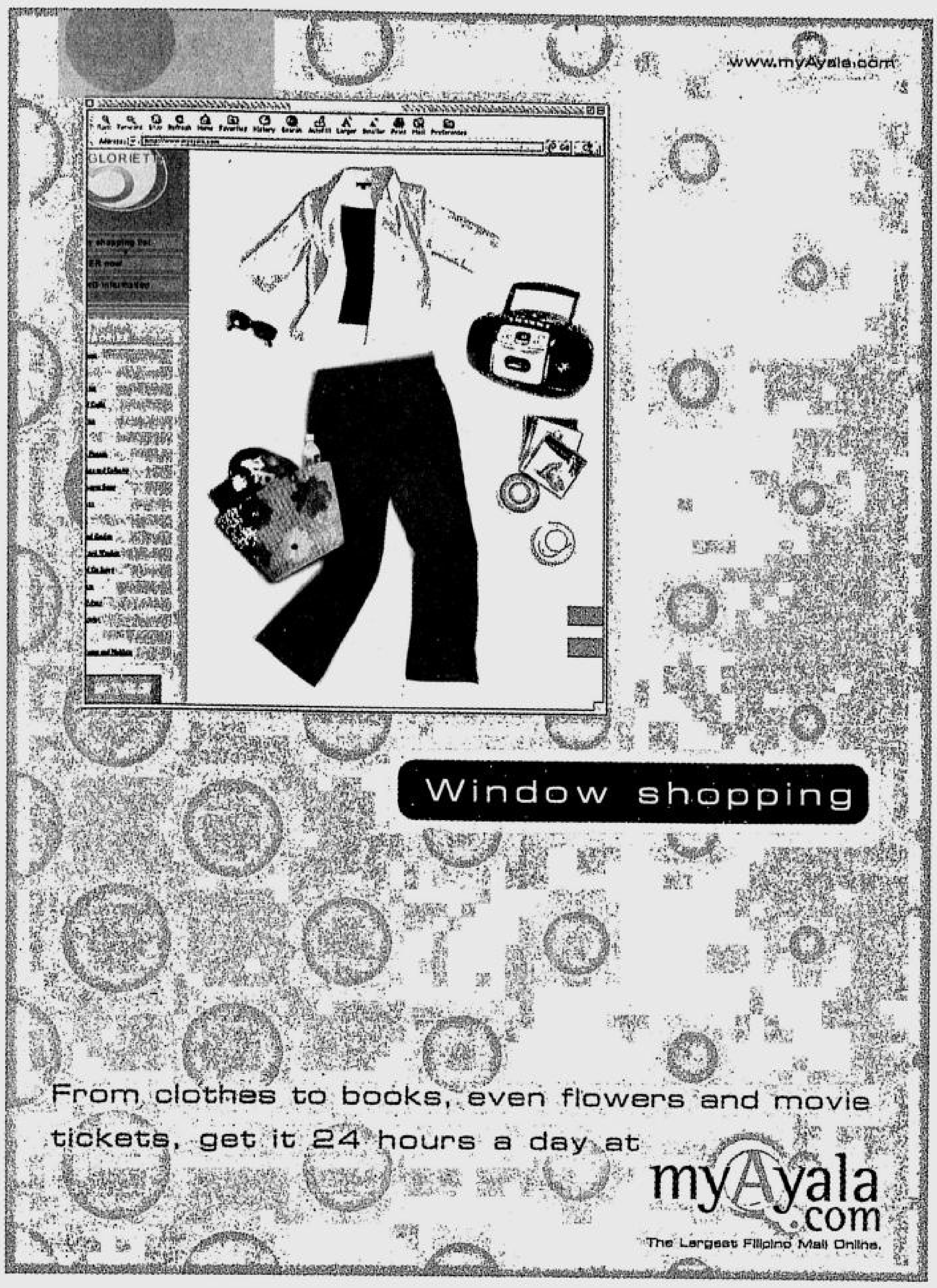
Moreover, Virtual MasterCard is the only virtual payment solution with a card-optional feature. Consumers who prefer to go completely virtual can avail of a Virtual MasterCard card just as easily as those who would feel more comfortable with a physical card in their hands.

Virtual MasterCard offers a host of other convenience for consumers. For one, adult account holders can provide family members – including children/students – with unique account numbers for online or over-the-phone purchasing. For another, consumers can "save" available spending on physical card that would otherwise have been used on virtual purchases.

The best part is Virtual MasterCard, like all other MasterCard programs, carries with it the unrivaled MasterCard service and the wide acceptance of the MasterCard brand – in the real and virtual worlds.

About MasterCard

MasterCard International has the most comprehensive portfolio of payment brands in the world. More than 1.7 billion MasterCard, Cirrus and Maestro logos are present on credit, charge and debit cards in circulation today. An association comprised of more than 20,000 member financial institutions, MasterCard serves consumers and businesses, both large and small, in 210 countries and territories. MasterCard is the leader in quality and innovation, offering a wide range of payment solutions in the virtual and traditional worlds. MasterCard's award-winning Priceless advertising campaign is now seen in 81 countries and in more than 36 languages, giving the MasterCArd brand reach and scope unrivaled by any competitor in the industry. With more than 21 million acceptance locations, no card is accepted in more places and by more merchants than the MasterCard Card. In 2000, gross dollar volume exceeded $857 billion. MasterCard can be reached through its website at www.mastercard.com.


www.myAyala.com
GLORIETTA
Window shopping
From clothes to books, even flowers and movie tickets, get it 24 hours a day at
myAyala.com
The Largest Filipino Mall Online.

MasterCard

The Future of Money™

MasterCard International has the most comprehensive portfolio of payment brands in the world. More than 1.7 billion MasterCard®, Cirrus® and Maestro® logos are present on credit, charge and debit cards in circulation today. An association comprised of more than 20,000 member financial institutions, MasterCard serves consumers and businesses, both large and small, in 210 countries and territories. MasterCard is the leader in quality and innovation, offering a wide range of payment solutions in the virtual and traditional worlds. MasterCard's award-winning *Priceless*® **advertising campaign** is now seen in 81 countries and in more than 36 languages, giving the MasterCard brand reach and scope unrivaled by any competitor in the industry. With more than 21 million acceptance locations, no card is accepted in more places and by more merchants than the MasterCard Card. In 2000, gross dollar volume exceeded US$857 billion: $740 billion from **credit cards**; $117 billion from **debit cards.**

Cirrus
Maestro

2BU!'S SPA EXPERIENCE

STEP into a steaming hot experience.

Trip to bliss

By Pam Pastor
Photos by Randy Hormillosa

THE TIMING couldn't have been more perfect. I was in the middle of possibly the busiest week of my life. I had three school projects and an oral report to work on, articles to be written, two major exams to study for (including Spanish, which I absolutely hate), meetings to attend and packing to do for my impending Cebu trip all jammed into what could be called my weekend from hell. A visit to the spa sounded heavenly, an oasis of sorts. Of course, it would have been better if the visit came after the hurricane had passed and I was no longer a bundle of nerves so that the relaxation could carry on the next few days. Then again, maybe the timing really was perfect. Relieve the tension a little, especially since I felt like I was on the brink of losing my sanity, with only four hours of sleep in almost four days.

When I got to Premiere City Club on First Street, New Manila, Jules and Yasmine were already being massaged. I was on my own. A very friendly receptionist led me to the locker area and handed me a robe and a pair of shorts. Since I just came from the house and had just showered, I went straight to the dressing room.

"Do I have to take all my clothes off?" I asked the lady outside.

"Yes, ma'am."

Oh. Okay. I went right back in. Then I stood there for a moment, trying to figure out whether she meant naked. I stepped outside the curtain again. "*Lahat ba?*"

"Yes, ma'am. *Dapat* robe *lang at* shorts."

Umm, no. I was keeping my panties on.

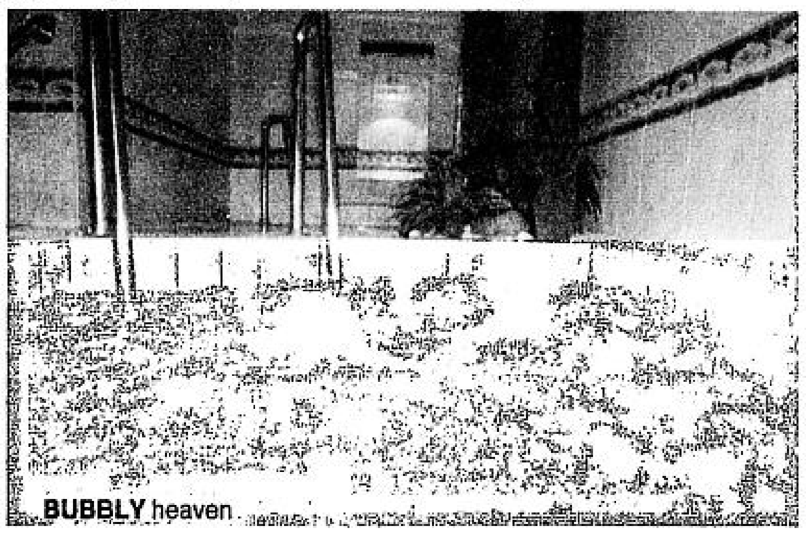
I headed up to the massage area, which was a dim room with cots all over. My masseuse wasn't there yet so I sat on my cot, which sadly, was on the brighter part of the room. I wanted to try and figure out where Jules and Yasmine were so I looked around. Whoops. I accidentally saw another woman's breasts. I went back to staring at the wall.

Soon, my masseuse was there, a small but terribly strong lady. "Ma'am, *pakitanggal po 'yung* robe."

I wasn't comfortable with being naked in front of a stranger—I refuse to even let my Mom see me only in my bra. But since she had a towel stretched in front of her, I figured that she'd cover me as soon as I dropped the robe. She wasn't quite fast enough. I ended up flashing her. I felt a flicker of embarrassment. Then I thought, what's the fuss all about, she probably sees breasts every day.

Heaven

So there I was, lying on my stomach, my face on the hole in the cot. I had a choice between Shiatsu and Swedish. I didn't know the difference. I decided to choose the one with oil, since "pressure points" sounded more like torture to me. My masseuse began kneading my body—it felt really good. I drew my breath in though when she touched my sore muscles. It began to hurt just a little bit. I found myself doing the Darth Vader breath Tim and JonJon taught us during our yoga attempt, but I stopped. I didn't want to scare my masseuse.



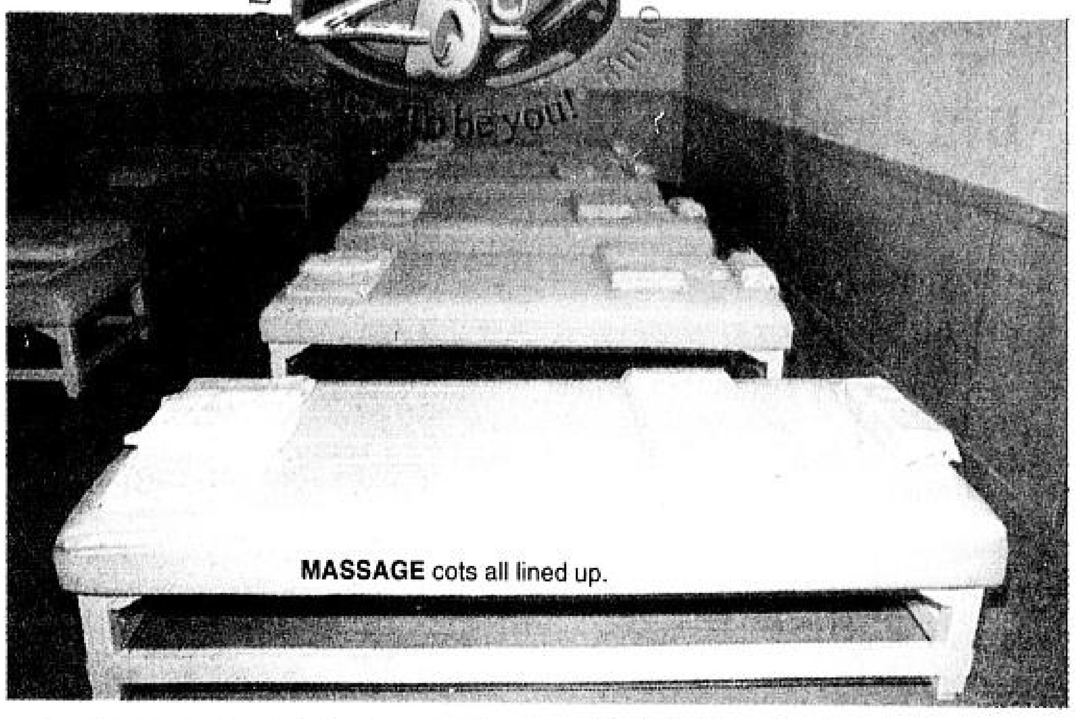
BUBBLY heaven

I was completely enjoying myself, thoughts of my deadlines and exams already floating away. Then the masseuse pulled down the shorts a bit and started working on my buttocks. I bit my lip and kept praying that Jules and Yasmine wouldn't finish just yet. I had already flashed my masseuse, I didn't want to moon them.

When that was done, I changed my position. I was lying on my back while she massaged my arms and legs. More women were coming in, but I didn't care anymore. By this time, I was in massage heaven. This went on for almost an hour. I was beginning to relax but I didn't want to fall asleep. The oil smelled minty. It felt really good.

Right in the middle of heaven, a woman's cell phone began to ring. She answered the call and started chattering away. I was counting the seconds before she put it back down. Ugh. I would have rolled my eyes, but they were closed.

After a while, my massage seemed to be over. I put my robe back on. Turns out the final part of my massage required me to sit down. I had my back to the masseuse. She massaged my back and then pulled me hard 'til I was leaning on her. I resisted, knowing that I was quite bigger than she was. She had just helped me relax. I didn't want to return the favor by breaking her bones. She told me to let go. Then she really pulled me until I was on top of her, with my body arched, facing the ceiling. This was the moment my robe chose to become undone. It fell open and once again I flashed everyone in the room. For a second there, I felt like a porn queen. Double ugh.



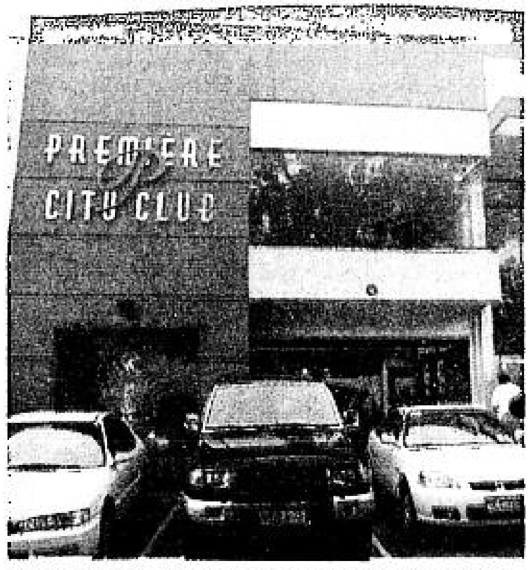
MASSAGE cots all lined up.

THE DEEP cleansing treatment

I quickly grabbed my robe and pulled it together so I could regain self-respect. My massage was done. I went out to the waiting room and found Yasmine and Jules, sipping iced teas and watching TV, contentment evident in their flushed cheeks.

Next on the list was a facial. I chose the "aromatherapy" kind because "deep cleansing" involved pricking and needles scare me to death. Jules, the masochist that she is, opted for that one. I wouldn't dare. Yasmine chose the body scrub.

Refreshing



THE PREMIERE City Club on First Street, New Manila

We headed down for the treatment room, Jules and I in one and Yasmine in another. I was once again lying on another cot, thankful I wasn't in Jules' place. She was on what looked like a dentist's chair which evidently meant pain. I kept pestering the girl to tell me what she was doing to my face.

Jules and her dermatologist were talking about the kinds of aromatherapy treatment they had. The dermatologist asked if we still had meetings after. I said no. Good, she said, they'd be using peppermint on us. Goody, I thought, since I love the smell of peppermint. Then I heard the reason for the choice. Peppermint relaxes you, that's why it's for people who can rest after the treatment and do not have to worry about meetings and such. Wait a minute, I did not have a meeting, but I intended to once again stay up all night to study and work on my papers. "What's the other choice?" Sweet orange. Umm, I'm not exactly a citrus fan. "It's an energizer," according to them. Energy? That I needed. Slap it on then.

She began by putting cleansing milk on my face. It felt cool, a contrast to the oil on my body. She was softly massaging my face the whole time. She wiped my face clean and then used a facial scrub, which had a grainy texture that was very similar to the Apricot Scrub I have in my bathroom. It felt very different though, and a lot better, when someone else was putting it on you. The pampering was doing me a lot of good. I was actually starting to love the world again despite the torture I had been going through the past days. It was at this point that Jules started whimpering because she was getting shots on her face. Suddenly, I was a mixture of emotions. Pity for her and gratitude that there were no needles around me. After the scrub, toner was applied on my face. Then came the black mask that turned gray when it dried. After the mask was wiped off, toner was again applied. And I was done. I felt completely refreshed.

Since Jules' treatment wasn't over yet, I headed to the other room. Yasmine's body was being scrubbed with salt from the Dead Sea. She then went through a long process of rinsing, going in for another scrub and then steaming. Apparently, she was enjoying every minute of it.

When all three of us were done, we went for a tour of the entire establishment. Impressive. According to their marketing person, Premiere's way of getting an edge over other spas is to present a mini sports club to their members. That they have done. There are badminton courts, a gym, an aerobics area, a coffee shop and a salon aside from the massage and beauty treatments, sauna, steam rooms and jacuzzis. Nonmembers may also avail of the services. Massages can go as low as P450 but they also have promos like facial and massage (P750) and body wrap and massage (P1,200).

All in all, it was a wonderful experience for me. Sans the little boo-boos that I think are inevitable in my existence, I felt like a queen for a day. I'm definitely, definitely going back. And next time, I'm going to remember to tie my robe properly.

E-mail the author at p-a-m-m-y@gurlmail.com.

My best hair day yet

By Jules Alcantara

GIRLS (okay, guys, too) are always on the constant lookout for the latest trends in fashion and beauty. What can I say? The things we do for the sake of vanity—ah, I mean, looking good—sometimes defy logic and reason. But there are certain things that require extensive rumination on our part—like trying a new salon or a new hair color.

You can't just ignore your favorite parlor, right? Of course, it's a different story if its staff burned your hair or stripped off your right eyebrow. It takes some time and effort before one can establish a harmonious relationship with her stylist or barber. It's an intimate relationship. So imagine how cutting your ties with your favorite salon staff can be heartwrenching—it can even be a traumatic experience!

And let's not forget hair color! I know of certain people who faint at the thought of having highlights or streaks on their mane. Albeit I do not belong to that particular group of people, I do get goose bumps at the thought of getting a botched color job. It doesn't help that I have quite strong features ("You look like a pale Greek chick," a friend told me once) so just a drop of the wrong color mixture can spell disaster with a capital D.

Yasmine of Pinoycentral has been bugging me for weeks to change my look—"You should get highlights or cut your hair," she constantly shrieked every time we bumped into each other. I took her advice, but I am not going to admit I just wanted the shrieking to cease.

I am going to be honest, though, and say I was filled with trepidation upon entering Basement's new salon in Rockwell. New salon, new hair color, I thought. This is a quantum leap into the unknown—I could either end up looking like the next Hollywood wannabe or a sort of trash. I even thought of buying a brown bag before going to the salon—in case I end up looking horrible.

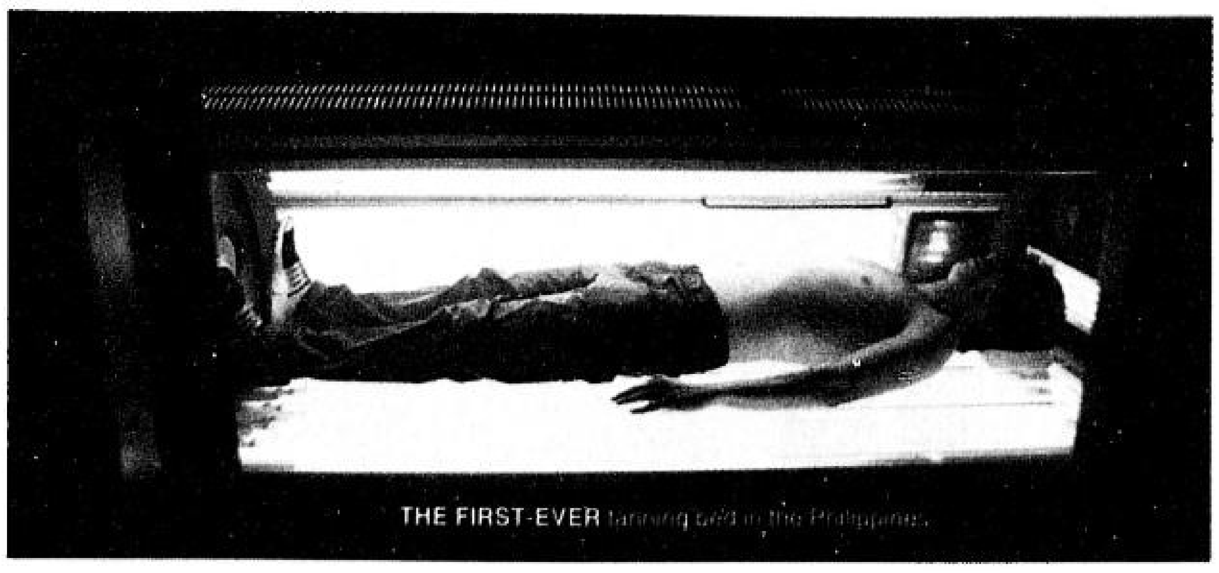
Visual delight

The salon is, to say the least, a visual delight. Basement is an architectural dream. It's definitely not your run-of-the-mill parlor. Wow! I said to myself as the owners took me on a tour of the place. The ceilings are high and the interior designs and natural lighting blend so well. The place is fancy—but not deceiving. Service is excellent. I wanted to try the tanning bed (the first in the Philippines), but didn't have enough time for it. (Well, next time I can probably fulfill my longtime dream of becoming a bronze goddess, har har!)

LORD Farquaad would go nuts here.

PHOTOS BY ROMY HOMILLADA

From the moment you enter, you know the people who run it are not your typical parlor characters (I'm not even going to start on that lest I be accused of being too observant or being a rumormonger). A girl led me to my area—yes, all the head stylists of Basement have their own area—and immediately, Kenti Tam, a senior stylist, attended to my vain desires, I mean my needs. He is not your usual chatty stylist. From the tone of his voice, you could tell he meant business.



THE FIRST-EVER tanning bed in the Philippines.

THE BASEMENT team of experts

"What would you like?" he asked. He did not impose and even went to the extent of asking about my daily routine and schedule. I told him I wanted a cut, but nothing too drastic—the curls of my hair had a mind of their own. I told him I wanted a change of hair color—even though I had just gotten a color job two weeks before. Normally, any salon would just follow your whims (it spells big bucks for the business), not taking into consideration the potential damage to one's hair. But Kenti tested the hair color before giving me a color job. For five minutes, he compared the color test to the color of my skin and face.

"Why don't you read some magazines first?" he said while giving me a portable metal rack full of magazines. I was in heaven.

I watched how Kenti cut my hair in such creative manner. In all the years I had been getting haircuts, I had never seen such preciseness. It was an art for Ken. Words cannot describe the awe I felt as I watched him work. For a long moment, I forgot he was cutting my hair. For the first time, I had an anxiety-free haircut experience.

All the fears I had about getting a hair damage disappeared when they explained that the hair color they were going to apply to my hair, Davines Mask Color and Hair Treatment in One, is milk-based. "This has low ammonia and peroxide so it won't damage your hair even more," he explained. No more worries—I could finally relax and cease being a control freak for once.

Two weeks later and I am still walking on cloud nine. I adore the color of my hair. And my hair cut did not in any way pose a problem during those "I-don't-have-time-I'll-just ponytail-my-hair" days. And you know what? There wasn't even a need for that brown bag.

Basement Salon is at 2/F Powerplant Mall, Rockwell (tel. 899-6666)

Wardrobe, not exercise, will 'fix' short legs

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

MY legs are short in relation to my torso. Is there an exercise I can do to make them longer? What clothes can I wear for better proportion?

MARIAN

No exercise can make your legs longer. What you can do is to plan your wardrobe so you will look more proportioned. Wear slim-fit pants in dark colors and wear shoes with low to medium heels. High-heeled boots matching the color of your pants can also help achieve that "longer" look. Make sure your tops are short, reaching to just above the hip, to give the illusion of a shorter torso. When wearing a skirt, go shorter. If you have slim legs, wear minis to micro minis. Wear above knee to knee-length skirts if your legs are on the big side. And always wear stockings and shoes (dark stockings, shoes and skirt if you have heavy legs) that match your skirt.

The monochromatic or one-color look will give an illusion of length. If you must wear a long skirt, make sure it has a slim fit. Pair it with a hanging top or cropped blazer. Avoid long and full skirts, relaxed fit or wide leg pants like palazzo, too long and loose blouses or jackets, folded hem pants (turn-ups), flat shoes and super high heels that shorten calves further.

* * *

I am 5'3" with big hips and thighs. I can't find jeans that fit me well. They either flatten my butt or make my thighs look like sausages about to explode. I am underweight, but jeans always make me look fat. I am sick of skirts and slacks. Are relaxed fit jeans my only option?

JOHANNA

Relaxed fit jeans only look good on women 5'6" and above. Anyone smaller than that will look like they have short fat legs or, as my family used to tease me, like they are kneeling down. Having the same dilemma with jeans, I found happiness only with the ones labeled stretch slim fit and made for petite women. Petite means 5'4" and under. Stretch jeans will control bulges without flattening your curves. I found my jeans in Australia under the brand name Innovare. My other pair was a Korea-made that I got in a Christmas bazaar. Finding them is the tricky part. From now on, when denim shopping, ask the saleslady for the stretch ones. Beware of salespersons who force you to buy the ones they have on hand that is not stretch by telling you how fabulous you look in them. If they don't have stretch, move on.

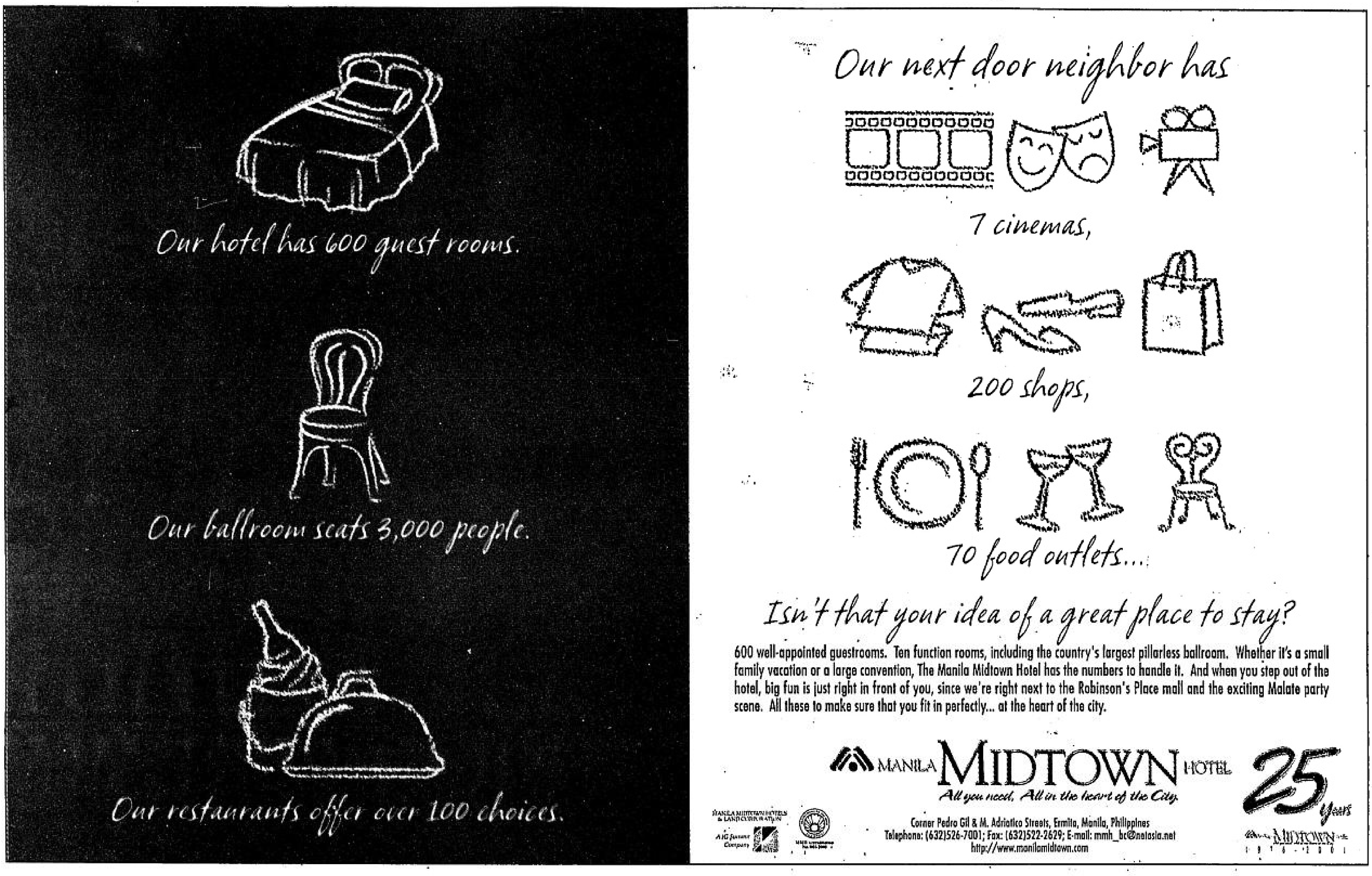
* * *

I love the look of nude lips so much that I bought a whole bunch of those shades. Problem is, before I found the perfect shade for me, I got stuck with a lot that were too pale and orange-y. I tried using nude lip liner with them but they ended up being too matte, although using some of the same color improved the result. I want sheer or gloss nude pinky browns. I am only 15 and living on an allowance so I can't spend too much money.

BIANCA

First thing you must learn is that lipsticks labeled nude are too pale peachy brown or orange because they are formulated for Caucasian skin. Asian women's perfect nudes are pink toned. Look for shades like twig, fawn, malt and spice, but test them before buying. You don't have to throw the old lipsticks you have. Your problem can be remedied by buying violet tinted gloss or lip balm. Try grape Chapstick or grape-flavored lip balm such as Wet 'n' Wild. Ever Bilena lip roller gloss in grape works, too. Apply under or over too pale/orange lipstick for different shades. The blue tinge will neutralize the orange pigment and make a perfect pinky nude in sheer.

Write to Makeover 911, PDI Lifestyle or fax at 897-4805



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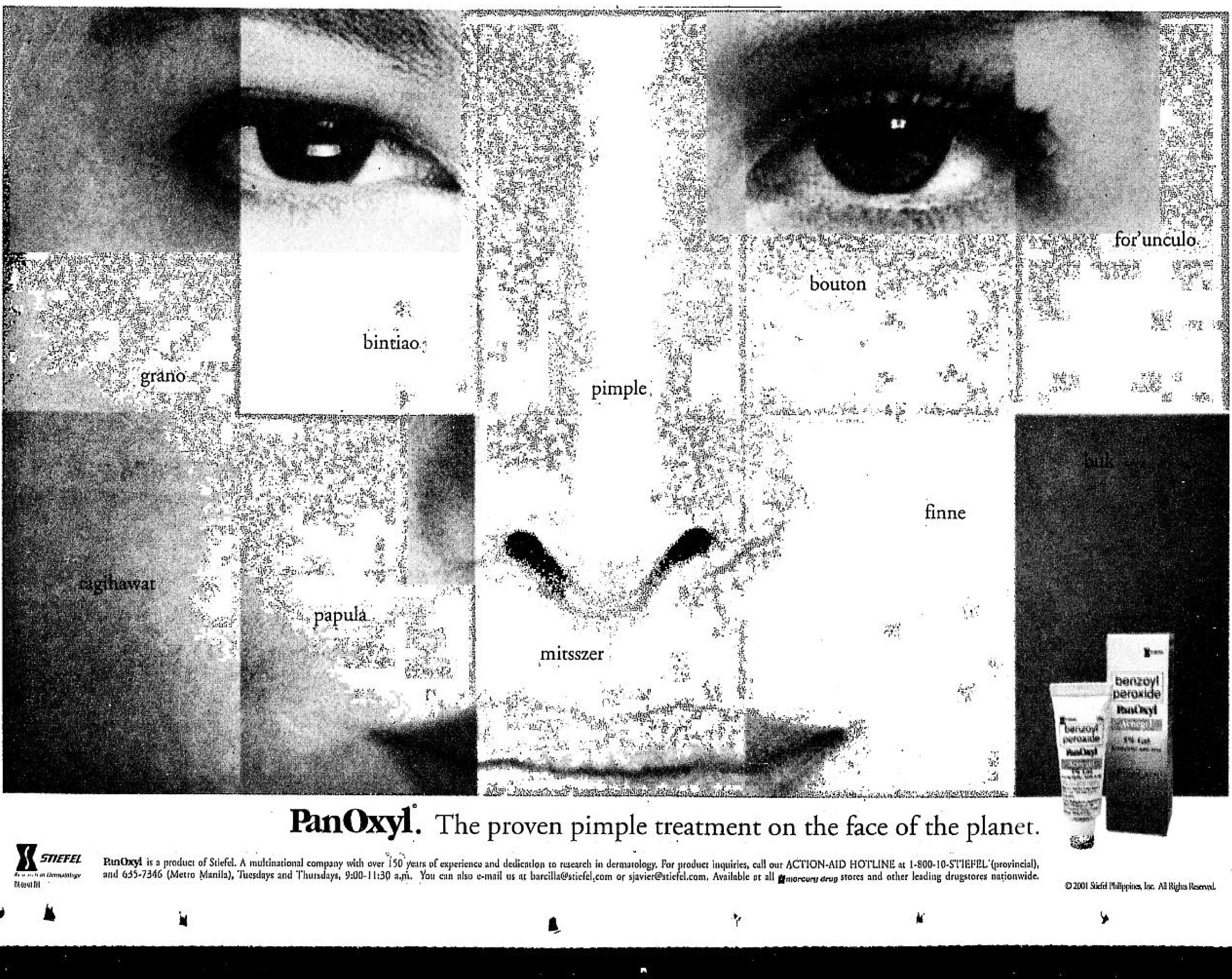

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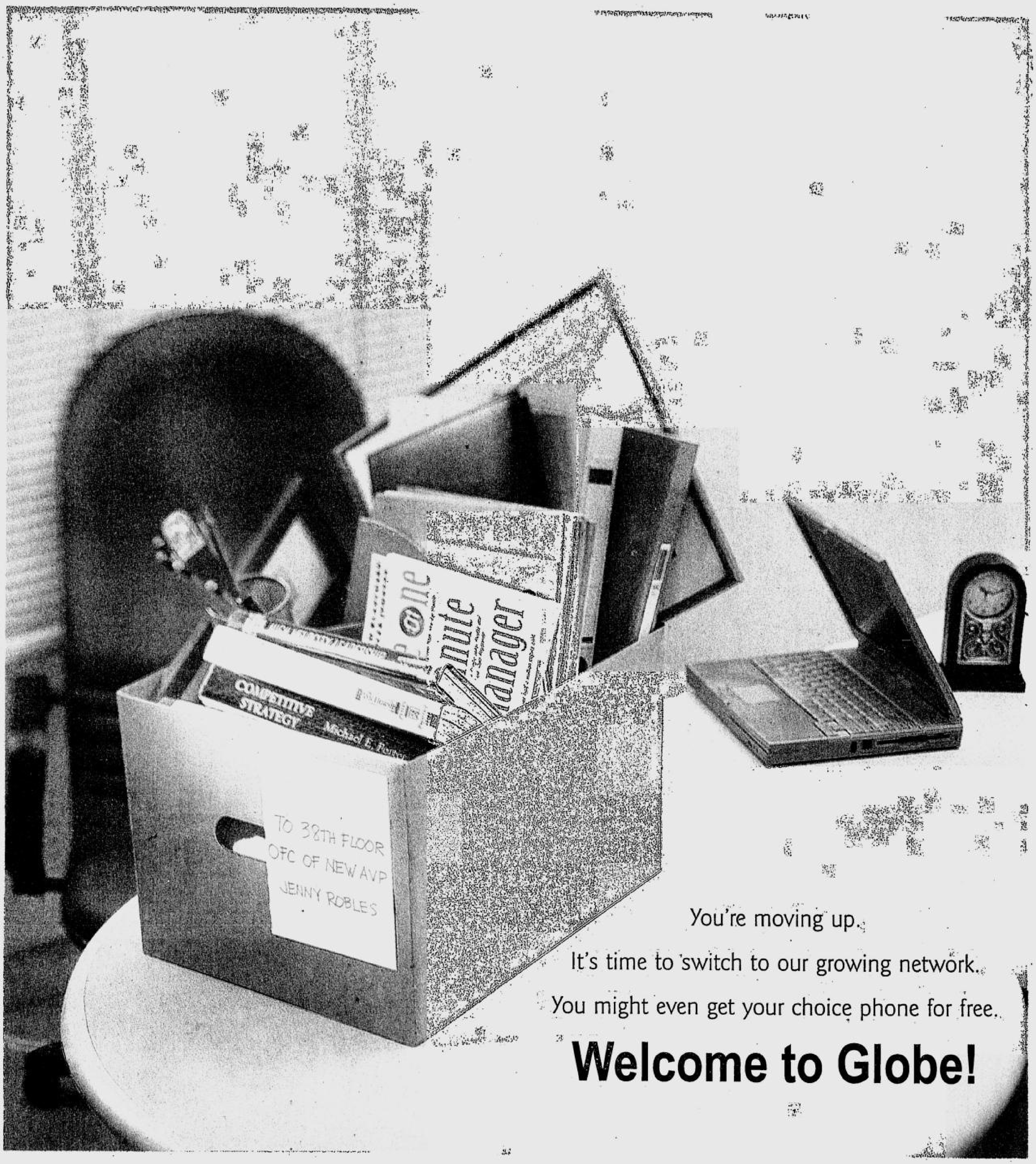

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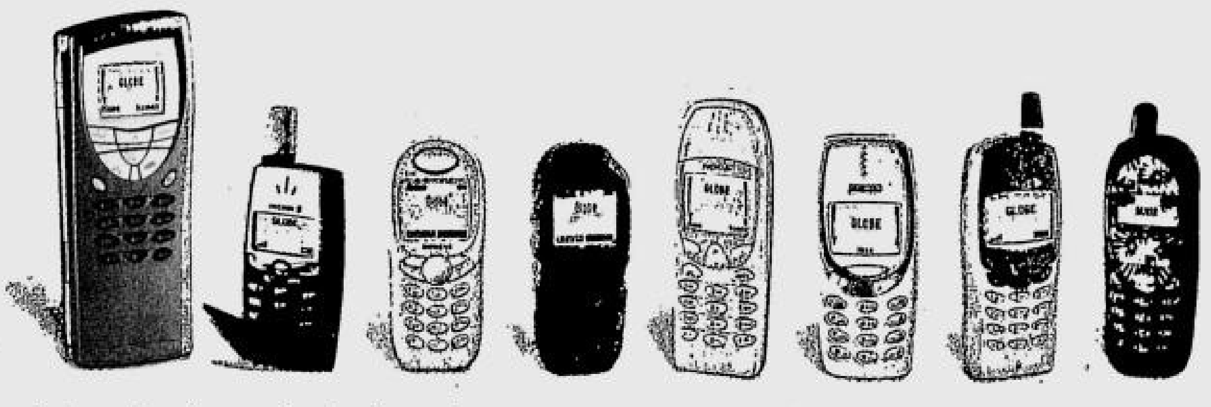

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URBAN JUNGLE CEBU

Test of endurance, wit and intelligence

By Pam Pastor
Photos by Joan Bondoc

ONE by one they biked up the steep incline of Fernan Bridge. Then they strapped on the harness and rappelled down one of the bridge's strong concrete pillars. Though red-faced and dripping with sweat, the Urban Jungle athletes in the Fun category of the race made it look so easy.

One by one they made their way down the rope, some of them sliding down with a flourish, triumphant grins lighting up their flushed faces. Those who were done rushed off toward the water where they would be kayaking. Race creator Thumbie Remigio looked on proudly at the flurry of activity around. These people were his kindred spirits. Twenty-eight-year-old Thumbie had been an adventure racer for years. He had devoted more than half of his life to his love for sports, beginning early with his years spent scouting, mountaineering and rock-climbing. Then he decided he wanted an even bigger thrill. He had since then become one of the, if not, the best adventure racers in the country, having competed and won in international races. According to him, for adventure racers, pain equals enjoyment. Evidently so. Especially since we are talking about a guy who has fallen 45 ft and hit the ground and has experienced hypothermia and exces-

TEST/ p.D2

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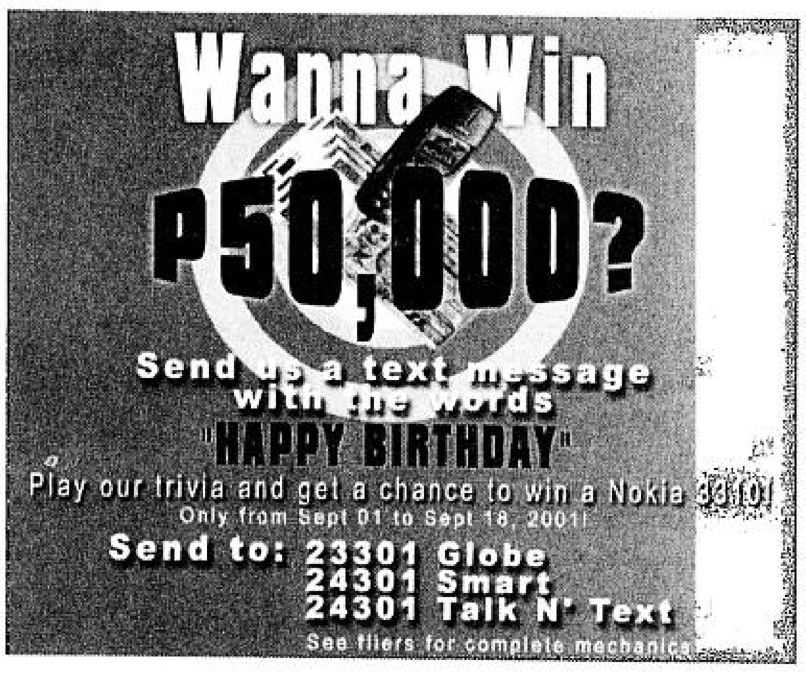

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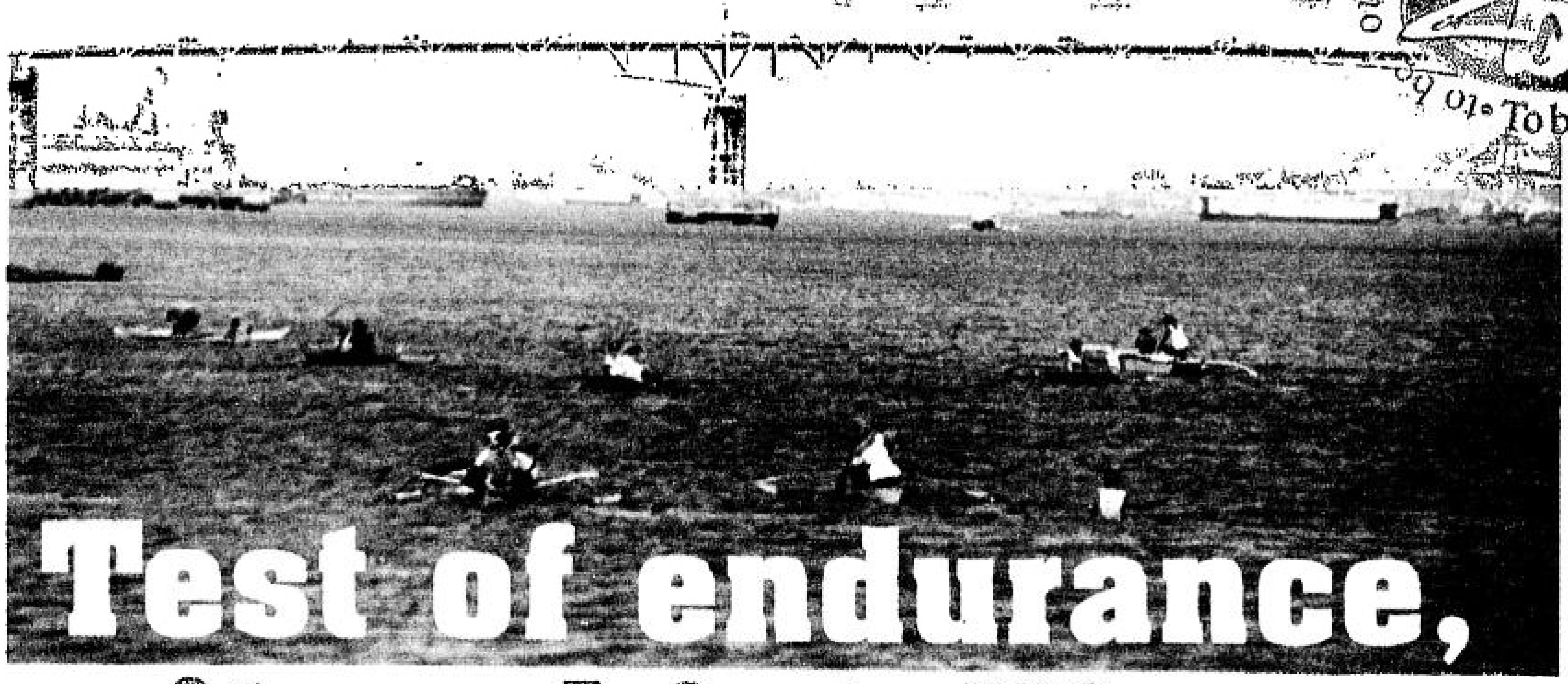
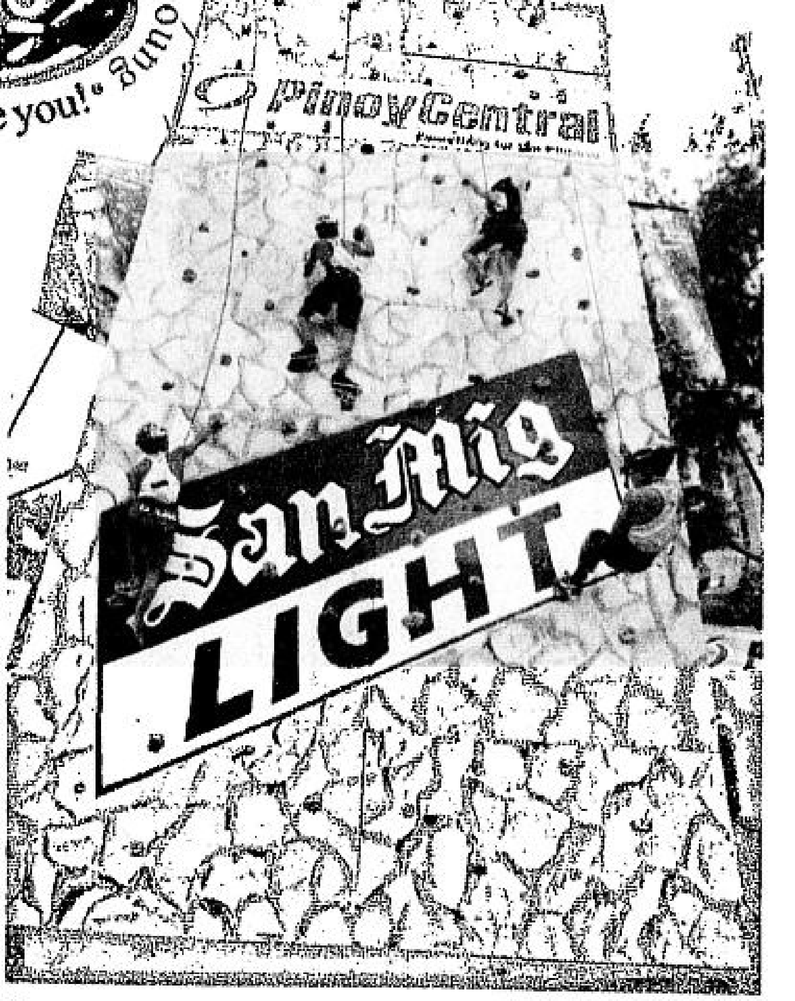
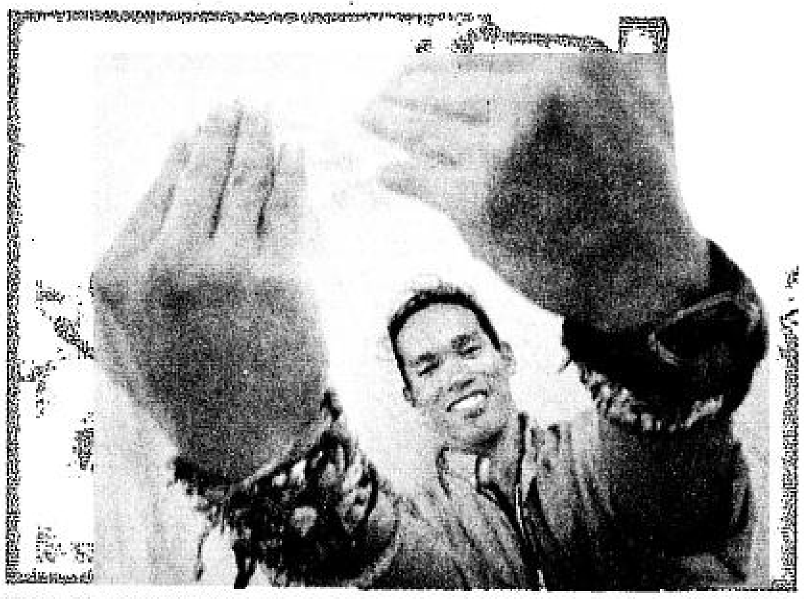
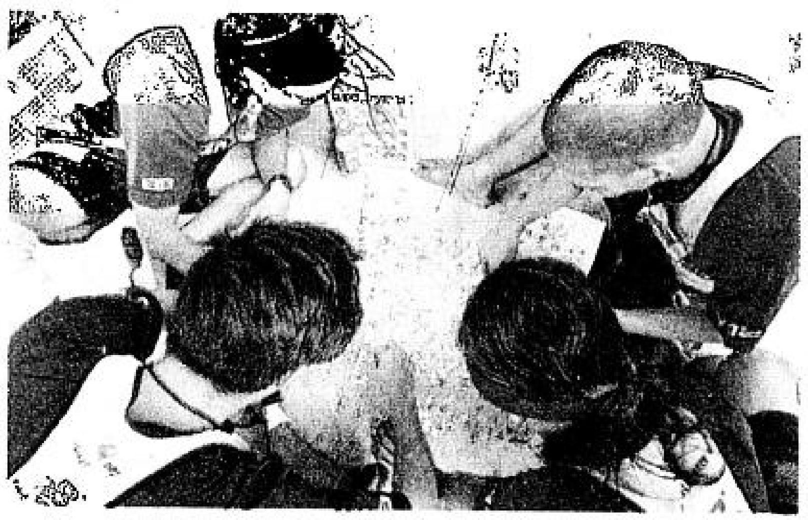


Test of endurance, wit and intelligence



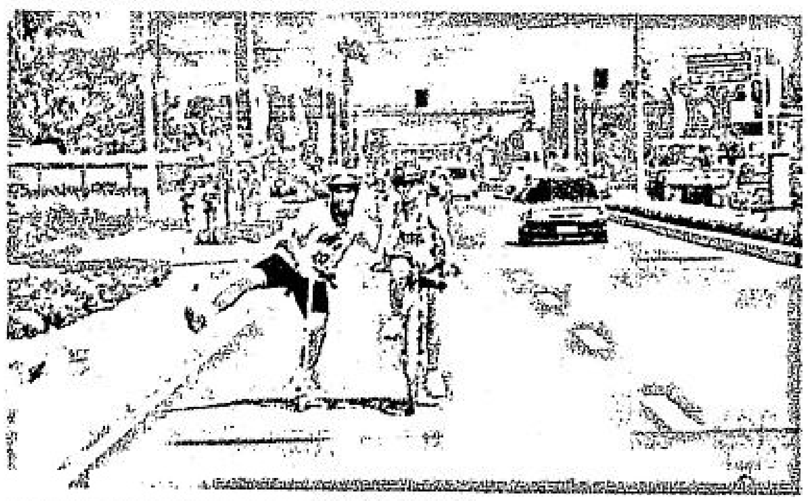


THE CREATOR'S HANDS. Thumbie, the guy who designed the race course.



SUDDEN CALM. Participants take a break from the flurry of activity to put together Mickey Mouse puzzles.

TRIUMPHANT. UPM-Guerilla Wear won the Fun category in the Urban Jungle in Manila and Cebu.



PARTICIPANTS invade Cebu's streets.

(From page D1)

sive bleeding due to the freezing weather in some of the countries he has competed in. The long hair, countless beaded and friendship bands speak for themselves. The guy is a free spirit. And he has survived it all. No other guy was fit to design the course of the Urban Jungle race. The course took the participants and spectators to significant landmarks in Cebu. Thumbie spent a month there, getting to know the place, finding areas he could deem fit for the competition.

And it's not only him. The two races that took place last Aug. 24-25 were the result of the hard work of countless people, particularly from Pinoycentral.com and San Mig Light. This event holds much meaning for the two companies. Pinoycentral.com believed this was the perfect way to launch another dimension to their site, http://adventure.pinoycentral.com while San Mig Light thought that this project was perfect for them. Brand manager Jogee Cruz, who joined the fun race held in Manila a few months ago, said, "We have long been promoting the active lifestyle. Adventure racing is something new that should be introduced."

Nonstop racing

Two races were held in Cebu, the first one being the Elite category which meant 24 hours of nonstop racing for advanced adventurers. Teams of six people (four racers and two support crews) would go around Cebu, Mandaue and Lapu-Lapu cities biking, running, walking, riding scooters, rappelling, paddling, etc., etc., etc.

Due to the seemingly inevitable screw-ups in the PAL airport system, they were halfway into the race when Joan and I arrived in Cebu. We decided to catch whatever we could and completely focus on the next day's fun race. The 24-hour duration of the race sounded unbearable, even impossible for a totally unfit being like me. But these athletes were serious about it. So serious that at past 4 a.m., after a night out, we passed by adventurers still walking in the dark in a race against time. Talk about sheer determination.

Throughout the entire race, emergency mobiles were on standby, ready to face anything that might take place in the course of the race. And in a tough course like this, accidents might just happen. Amy Huston, the team leader of 2Tone, fell off a sharp curve at Tops while riding her scooter, cutting her lip open in the process.

The next morning, right after much jubilation over the fact that the Elite race was over, with a Cebuano team called the Urban Goats (composed of hardcore athletes Jim Doran Webb, Nogie Biagan, Sean Fernandez, Winnie Chan, Simon and Grace Hoyle) finishing after 16 hours and 38 minutes of racing, the fun race started. Though less experienced than their Elite category counterparts, these people had the same steely perseverance. Helmeted players stood under the scorching heat of the sun at the circle outside Ayala Center which was the race's home base. There was a mixture of teams from Manila and Cebu, with even foreigners participating. Among the participants were UPM-Guerilla Wear, formerly known as Adobo Republic, the winner in the Fun category in the Urban Jungle in Manila. This time, they were set to conquer Cebu.

"Are you ready to suffer?" a scream came, signaling the start of the race. Hyper shouts pierced the air and they were off.

For once in my life, I felt like a paparazzi. I was with Joan and Yasmine of Pinoycentral.com climbing aboard the Tamaraw, jumping back out, chasing and running all over the place like headless chickens to be able to catch up with the athletes.

What a sight they were. Riding their bikes and scooters, running, making their way through, snaking in and out the busy traffic, the participants huffed and puffed. They all had one thing in common—you could see nothing in their faces but determination.

From scooters and bikes they hopped on go-karts and went around a huge dirt track with the rest of their teammates cheering in the background. After that, they headed back to the bikes to get to Fernan Bridge. Cebu residents sauntered out of their houses to catch the excitement.

Grueling process

While this was happening, Urban Jungle's site was constantly being updated so people from all corners of the globe could keep abreast with what was going on.

The athletes seemed to like the attention. Some of them grinned and waved when they saw Joan's camera. One guy even fell over because he was too busy posing.

BRAVING through the tyrolean traverse while mallers gawk.

THROUGH THE SPOKES. One participant checks out his equipment.

After rappelling, they proceeded to kayak. By this time, a mixture of sweat and water dripped from the participants' tan and lean bodies. This didn't seem to faze them a bit. They gamely faced the surprise challenge, which was definitely a big surprise. They were asked to put together a jigsaw puzzle. Now one could almost imagine the difficult transition from doing hardcore muscle-pulling by paddling in the water to the sudden delicate task of putting together little pieces of cardboard to create a picture of Mickey Mouse and his friends. The athletes gamely sat down on the concrete under Fernan bridge and started the grueling process. Those who were done proceeded to an Internet café where they had to log on Pinoycentral.com and meet yet another surprise challenge. They had to create a four-line poem about the race. Evidently, the race was not only a test of endurance, but of wit and intelligence as well. After a few more challenges, including a modified three-legged race that consisted of four people's legs being tied together, the fun race was over. John Galindez, Raul Padilla, Nina Torres, Lara Saguisag and Cedric Ponce, collectively known as UPM-Guerilla Wear, were successful in their quest to conquer Cebu.

That night, the winners were proclaimed at the awarding ceremony at one of Cebu's hottest nightspots, The Village. Cebu bands performed one hit after another as the athletes celebrated their success with the organizers of the event.

Winners in the Elite race won P15,000, P12,000 and P8,000, respectively, while Fun race winners took home P7,000, P5,000 and P3,000. But I would like to believe—and I'm sure that the organizers and participants in this event would agree—that race was not about money. It was about determination and strength and meeting a challenge head on and overcoming it with the help of friends.

The second and third place winners in the Elite Category were UTA1 and Bombproof. In the Fun Category, T.R.I.B.E. and UTA 3 took second and third place, respectively.

Watch out for the next Urban Jungle race which will be held in Baguio. Visit http://adventure.pinoycentral.com for more details.

FULL STOP. Catching their breath at Fernan Bridge

Friendship thrives beyond the court

BY JULES ALCANTARA
PHOTOS BY MIKE ALQUINTO

MUCH has been said about this season's competition as one of the toughest and if I may add, one of the most controversial. As of press time, two of the final four slots are still up for grabs among four to five teams. Games have been marked by hooliganism, both on and off the court. And let's not forget the controversial eligibility issue raised against Mark Cardona that has become a glaring example of how boardroom politics can affect the world of sports. Nevertheless, everyone has caught on the UAAP fever. Let's take a side trip and backtrack a bit to last year's season.

They may have already left the UAAP but Mon Jose, Alvin Castro and Ronald Cuan have certainly left their mark in the world of collegiate basketball. Who could forget their on-court heroics last year that led De la Salle University to capture their third consecutive UAAP crown? Lest we forget, these court generals not only captured the crown, but also the hearts of many fans from different schools. These three took the arduous and tough road to achieving what many only dream of accomplishing—the bragging rights to not just one, but three championship trophies.

So after a year of reigning supreme in the UAAP court, where will the road lead for Mon, Mac and Alvin?

To Taft

Their paths would not have crossed had they not ended up as Green Archers. Mon was being recruited by Ateneo but decided to study in DLSU. Alvin was supposed to study in UP but since Mon and Don Allado (also a friend from the US) were already with the DLSU team, he decided to follow suit. Mac, although an esteemed high school varsity player, did not start out as a recruit of the basketball team. If it were not for guts and determination (combine that with the right breaks from his coaches Jong Uichico and Franz Pumaren) Mac would not have become one of the league's premiere point guards. If destiny had taken a different turn, these three would have ended up as opponents on the court.

Playing for the same team for four years, their teamwork is not exclusive to the court. Mon and Alvin knew each other way back when they were both still based in the US. Mon entered DLSU first—Alvin followed after a year. Mon and Alvin admit that they came here to Manila to get a scholarship while playing basketball. "In the States, I could have just gone to school and not play. But it's (college) so expensive there, even more if you want to get to a good school. And also, I wanted to keep on playing," Mon explains. "We clicked right away. Our personalities complement each other. Mon is *tahimik*, the silent leader. Alvin is the *madaldal* and *makulit*," Mac says. Mon joins in and jokingly adds that Alvin is *pikon*. "And Mac is the *pinakamalandi*," Mon says amidst laughter.

Journey

At one point, Mac and Mon not only were together in the training team but they were also bunkmates in the dorm. They were practically joined at the hip—they lunched and bummed around together during break time "At that time, it was so hard *kasi wala pang text*. So we really had to know each other's class schedules," Mon recalls. They even unwillingly admit that they cruised for pretty girls together. "But we just looked," Alvin stresses.

"We have been teammates for the longest time," Alvin shares. Part of the team's winning formula was that they had gelled together so well as a team and as friends. If Mac had made a blind pass, it was not because he wanted to prove his skills as a top gunner—it was because he knew Alvin would be there to get the ball and sink it in the ring. Mon (who was widely praised not only for his skills but also for his leadership on the court) had no hesitation to steal

FRIENDSHIP/p.D6

Blondes do have more fun

By Maui V. Reyes

IF there's one thing that doesn't go out of style, it's pop. Pop is like denim—always reinventing itself, fusing itself with other elements, but still maintaining that "anything goes" feel. And with today's Orlando teens and pink frou-frou-wearing fans, pop is synonymous with a lot of hip-shaking, jive-bass sounds that move them to do those cheesy dance steps and write "I Love Justin T" all over their trapper keepers. And, of course, the more bleach you got going for you, the more people will love you.

Blonde chicks climb the Billboard charts faster than you can say, "Why did the blonde girl cross the road?" Amidst all the ditzy blonde jokes and silicone remarks (we're pretty sure Britney's friends don't grow that fast), you have to admit, they've got the glam, the glitz and the guys. And whether they were born with a luscious mane (calling Mandy Moore), or have to reach for that bleach bottle every few weeks (hello, Christina Aguilera!), blondes do have more fun singing pop songs and cheesy hooks.

Get a taste of the platinum life of heartbreak, cheating boyfriends and whatever else from these girls' two recent album releases that are vying for a place on countdowns everywhere.

Mandy Moore
"Mandy Moore"
Sony Music

Wanna know who the *real* genie is? She's got her own MTV show, has worked the ramp, can pull off a seductive straw-sipping stint (see "Candy" video) and has appeared in a movie before all her peers (Spears has been threatening to do a spot in "Dawson's Creek" and "Buffy," although apparently, the shows' producers do not know about it). She is also the first blonde teen act to actually experiment with different sounds. And while Britney claims her second album is "more mature" than the first, Moore gives her the boot with a deliciously Middle Eastern-flavored CD, with songs about first love and growing up. Only, there are not any "He smiled!" moments…Mandy's songs are about what it's like to be a teen without the bimbo factor. Think "blonde poetry."

The album kicks off with the carrier single "Hand in My Pocket" which gets you prepped for all the powerful vocals in the album. She steers clear of vocal gymnastics and keeps safe with multiple backing vocals, letting the music speak for itself. The second track, "You Remind Me," fuses Middle Eastern music with some R&B sounds, good hooks and a catchy chorus. She does "Split Chick" with that neo-'60s feel and morphs into Lisa Loeb-esque style with "When I Talk to You."

Although Moore did not pen any of the songs, she delivers them like they are her own. "Saturate Me" seems at first to be a bit too mature for a 17-year-old…("My soul is evaporating/Won't you saturate me?/Rain down on me with life") but then, hey, don't they grow up real fast? And this is exactly what sets this album apart from projects that seem to be no more than a showcase of fake boobs and short skirts. There is a certain glamour in Moore's songs. She is able to capture teen life without the unimportant stuff. She delivers substance without all that glitter that we don't need. Think what a 17-year-old girl thinks and you've got it in this pop album.

"17" speaks of her right to screw up now ("I don't wanna do right/I just want you tonight…Save my best behavior for a little later/'Cause I'm only 17"). She remembers her first love in "You Remind Me." Moore demands respect in "Yo-yo" (despite the title, it is a pretty good song), pointing out how she won't take flack from a guy who shies away from commitment. She gives a guy another chance in "One-Sided Love," but sets down the terms of the relationship ("Let me tell you where it's at/Hit me with your best shot").

It's obvious Moore wears the pants in the relationship. Although she has a bunch of cheesy songs in the album (can't avoid 'em), this Orlando-born singer is probably the only pop princess who actually shows signs of maturity. Just as Britney Spears has donned more revealing outfits than the stereotypical Las Vegas showgirl, she also does not have the elegance of Moore when it comes to music.

The album is still feel-good pop. Pop pros Emilio Estefan Jr. and Jon Secada penned some songs and produced the album, while Todd Chapman, whose credits include pop acts Dream and Wild Orchid, co-produced. Diane Warren pitched in with the sappy ballad "From Loving You."

Probably the downside to this all would be…what would she sing about when she is 18?

Jessica Simpson
"Irresistible"
Sony Music

Once upon a time, an ear-splitting singer wanted to fulfill her dream of becoming famous. She fell in love, proclaimed her "this is the guy I am gonna marry" feelings, and hit it with 98° Degrees fans when she hooked up with Nick Lachey for two years. Now Jessica Simpson, the 20-year-old minister's daughter, has broken up with her true love to "concentrate on her new album." Here is a piece of advice, Jessie—really, you should've stuck to your pop hunk.

If Aguilera can hit notes like a lonesome dog let out of the house, Simpson can shatter glass windows with her vocals. Almost annoying, she has been dubbed "the next Mariah Carey" having been taken under the wings of Sony bigwig and Carey's ex-husband, Tommy Mottola. She has started shedding her clothes with every video.

In her new album, Simpson uses the same formula that worked for Mariah—good pop tunes that go with the times ("Irresistible," "A Little Bit") and she earns points with a collaboration ("There You Were" with Marc Anthony). This almost makes her Carey's twin (although let's not forget the virginal part).

Loaded with sugary, sappy love ballads, this album is more like a resume of Simpson's vocals instead of something that someone can relate to (unless you're in love). It lacks its own identity, although when put next to other teen acts, she carries those high notes better. The songs in the album belong to Disney soundtracks, with that airy feel and lovelorn sighs.

Well, okay, she does advocate a bit of girl power. "What's It Gonna Be" has that '80s feel in it ("I wanna know where we stand/Are you gonna be a dog or a gentleman?/Tell me boy/What's it gonna be?"). "Imagination" has that R&B funk, thanks to Spice Girls album magic-maker, Rodney Jerkins. "Hot Like Fire," despite the cheesy phone conversation in the beginning ("Jessica? Omigosh, your boyfriend is playing you *so* bad"), has that "you know you're hot so you do that" message. Simpson admits as much while she gives the offending boyfriend a good lecture.

Trying to lace the album with some Spanish guitars in "When You Told Me You Loved Me" was probably a bad move, but Simpson's vocals make up for it. "Good friend" Nick Lachey co-wrote two songs in the album ("Forever in Your Eyes," "To Fall in Love Again"), which probably earns him "personal" points.

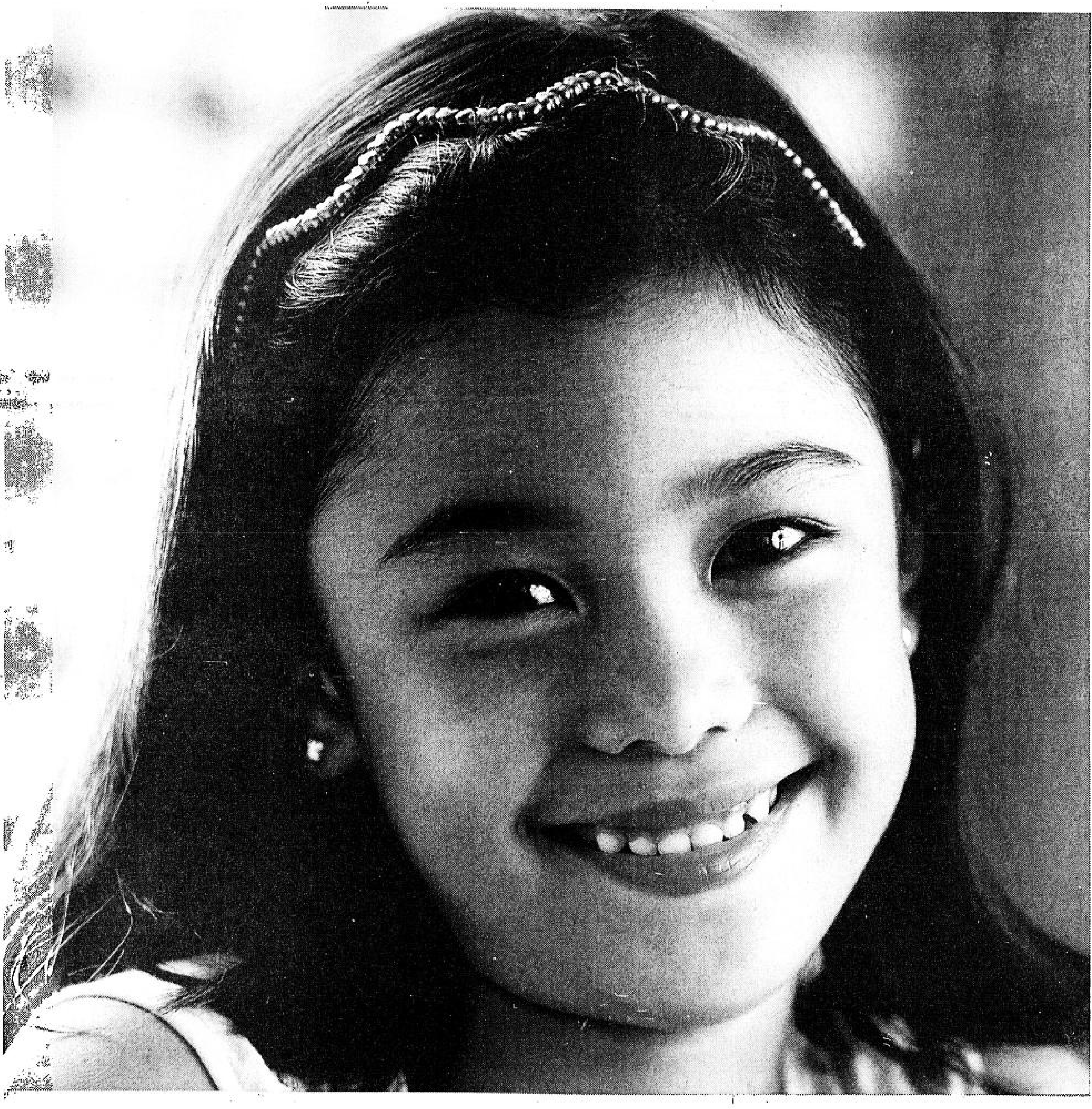
Lovesick ballad fans will get a kick out of sharing Jessica's (non-existent) pain. And although the album lacks originality, it will likely establish her in the music industry while she looks for her own identity. Maybe when she dons a bikini at a car wash for a video…

> Get a taste of the platinum life of heartbreak from girls who got the glam, the glitz and the guys as they vie for a place on countdowns

JESSICA Simpson

MANDY Moore

SULIT DAPAT ANG IYONG PAGHIHIRAP SA TRABAHO.



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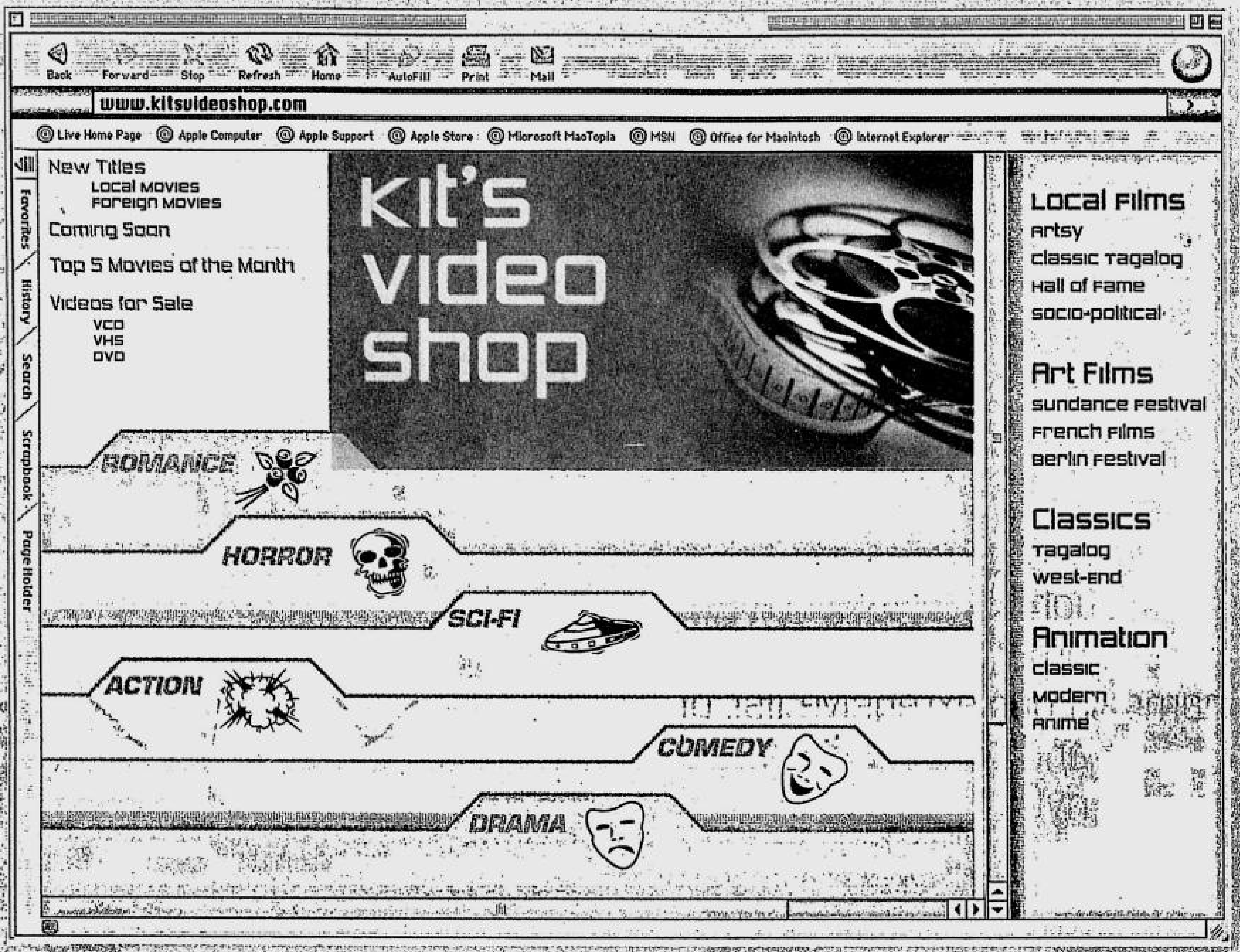

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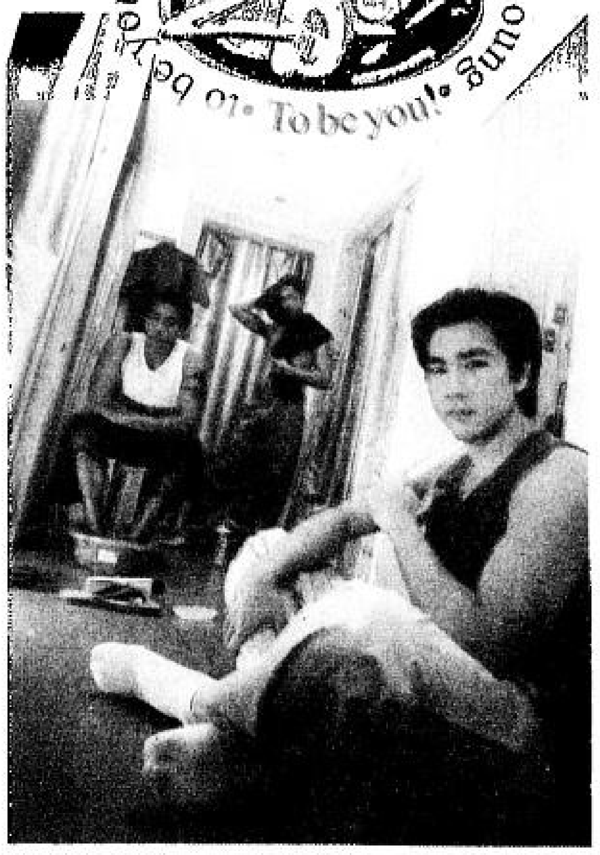
MON Jose

ALVIN Castro


TEAMMATES on and off the court

Friendship thrives beyond the court

Mon Jose, Alvin Castro and Ronald Cuan sustain the friendship that fuelled DLSU to three UAAP championships

(From page D2)

the ball, since he knew that his efforts at forcing the opposing team to make a turnover would not be in vain. "I can tell if Mon is mad *na* or *pikon na*," Alvin shares. He even adds that they all can sense if one of them has a problem or if they are in trouble. "I know I can depend on them that if ever I am in trouble, I know they would come to my rescue. And you know what? I would do the same for them," Mon says.

Their friendship extends even to their families. "We know and are close to each other's families," Alvin shares. "We just don't know Mac's girls," says Mon, much to Mac's chagrin. "'Cause I don't have one," Mac quickly replies. Alvin is married to his college sweetheart, Girlie, and Mon has been with the same girl, Tessa, for the longest time. Both Mon and Alvin agree that Mac is "up for grabs" as of the moment.

Is there anything that they don't know about each other? "Well, if we do have secrets from each other, it's most probably really personal that's why we haven't told each other—not because we don't trust each other," Mon says. They don't get to see each other that much these days. In fact, the pictorial was some sort of reunion for the three ball players. "Even if we don't see each other a lot anymore, we know that the friendship and the camaraderie is there. Even if *matagal kami di magkita*, once we see each other, it was as if we just saw each other yesterday," Mac narrates.

They may have left DLSU but their hearts are still with their alma mater—especially now that the team is being hounded by the eligibility issue that was raised against rookie Green Archer, Mark Cardona. When asked to comment, Mac says "DLSU would never fake documents just so a player can win! They can't beat us in the court so they will do it in the boardroom!" One can sense Alvin's indignation over the issue. "Mark's clean! There are just certain people who are trying to find ways to eliminate DLSU," he says. "I don't think there should be an issue. The board approved him before the season started. He should be allowed to play. I don't think this issue will affect the players. They'll just keep on playing. That's how it is every year. We are used to it," he explains with a grin.

Did their closeness in any way isolate the rest of the team? "We are all really good friends in the team," Alvin says. "Maybe we three really got close also because we practically joined the team at the same time," Mac explains. "We're batchmates actually," Mon adds. Being teammates must be similar to being in the same fraternity—bruises and injuries only happen during scrimmages and are not in any way meant to strengthen the bond between them. What strengthens them is a common interest—a passion not just for the sport, but also for playing excellent basketball.

Their victory last year was tinged with sadness since it signaled the end of their being teammates. "The whole year last year, I had been conditioning myself to accept that it would be our last year. There was nothing I could do about it but move on," says Alvin, trying very hard to sound objective about the whole thing. Still the ties that bind him to his teammates cannot easily be broken. Even though his stint in the UAAP is over, he has chosen to play for Osaka-Iridology, a DLSU-dominated team in the PBL. "I could have chosen to move on and play for another team but I decided to play for Osaka," he says, and this he attributes to the "brotherhood" that he has had with his former teammates in the UAAP.

"The whole year last year, we were really focused on winning the championship since you know, it was our last year," Mon explains. All of them were really bent on getting their last championship trophy of their collegiate basketball career. "We may not have been the most talented team of that season but every time we played, every time we put our jersey on, we really made sure that we played with a lot of heart. We may not have scored 20 points (individually) per game, but even in the littlest thing we could do for the team, we made sure we would deliver," Mac says.

It was a memorable moment for Mac when he came to watch DLSU's first game in Araneta this year. It was only then that it really dawned on him that he was no longer playing for the team. "As soon as I entered Araneta and took my seat behind the bench, and then the players entered the arena and I heard the fans cheering, that's when I realized that I am no longer playing. I am now cheering for my team," he wistfully describes.

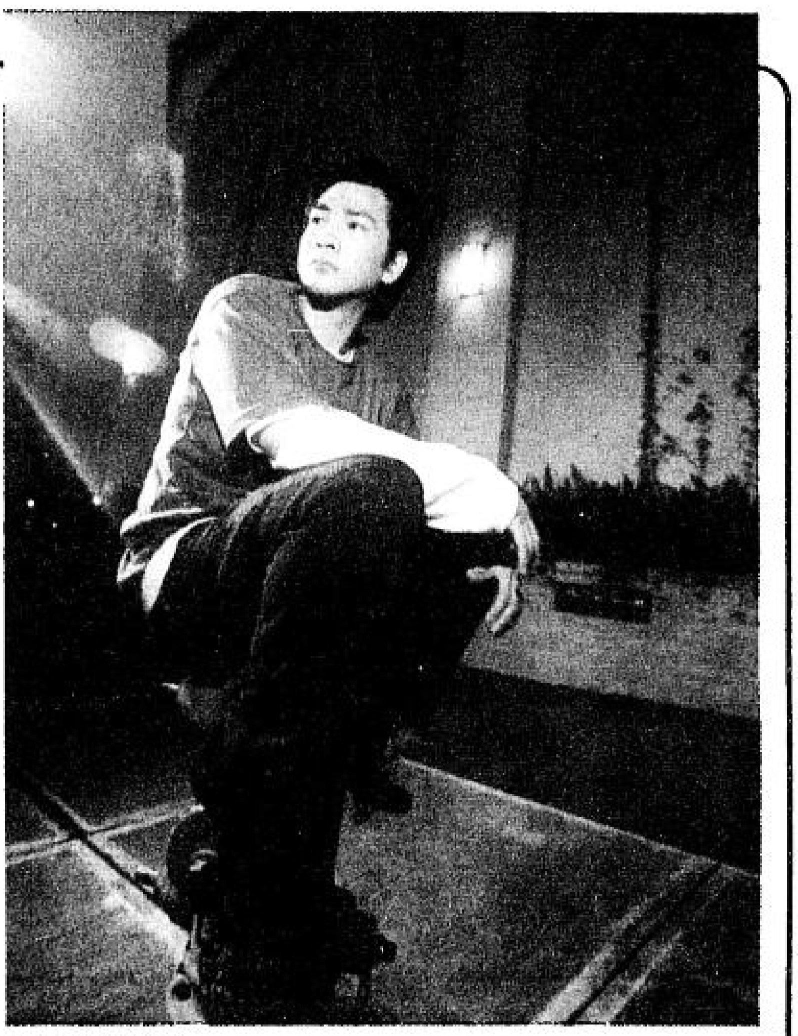
Two days after they jumped around the arena to celebrate their championship, Mon walked up the podium to receive his college diploma. "That's why I was really praying that we would finish it by the second game. If there had been a third game, I would not have even marched," he says with a grin. It was a momentous week for Mon. "When I got the athletics award, I was really happy since I was part of the mythical five and we had just become champions (for the third time) two days before," he recalls fondly. He would have felt undeserving of the award if they had not won the championship. It was only upon receiving the award when he realized that it was really that last time he would don the Green Archer jersey.

Different paths

All three of them are gearing up for the professional league. In fact, Mon is already living out his dream of playing professionally since he is already playing for the Pop Cola Panthers.

"I miss being in the same team with both of them. But realistically, we can't be teammates forever," explains Alvin. The chances of them ending up as teammates in the PBA are slim to none but this doesn't bother them in any way. One day, they will find themselves as opponents in the basketball court. This is not a source of potential personal conflict since they play from different positions. There is also the distinct possibility that not all of them will end up playing professionally. All these they take in stride.

Their college days are over. Their days as college basketball heroes and hard court heartthrobs are a thing of the past. Their paths may have crossed at some point but now is the time for each of them to take and follow their own road. But the journey continues as they try to break into the professional league. Competition between each other will be inevitable especially in the professional league. With the onslaught of players entering the PBA, only the fittest will survive. Not only will their skills will be put to the test, but also their will and character. Whether they fail or not, these three have surely won the crown in the test of friendship.


RONALD Cuan

For more informaton about the UAAP, log on to uaap.pinoycentral.com

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STRICTLY FETISH. Ed Aniel and Angelo Villanueva go where no man has gone before.

"**B** is for banana," says Khaki delos Reyes.

"**COME** and get me," whispers Buffalo man Raffy

"**HIGHER** and higher, lifting me up..."

VINTAGE PORN. Miguel Rosales and DJ Montano of Raj

BLONDE AMBITION. Renee Tuason and Christine Carlos

Live show

Tim Yap

SEXUAL tension filled the air as Buffalo jeans by **David Bitton** unveiled its latest line via "Porn Stars and Perverts" held at a hush, hush Makati Avenue hotspot. From the famed "pick up" strip, the models stormed through the venue documented by video—now what kind of maniac would do that?

Inside, they threw all caution to the wind and started to cavort with each other. A free-for-all ensued, with the audience as willing participants cheering the "action" going on center stage. "Indulge in your instincts," says **Vijay Chugani**, boss of Buffalo, the same company who organized last year's phenomenal hit "Pimps N' Ho's" party.

A sexually liberated parade of touchy guys and dolls in tattered shirts and jeans followed suit. Then, schoolgirl-types marched in to teach the already-thirsty crowd of media and VIPs (very much in-heat people) how to properly "eat" a banana.

It was about having no inhibitions and letting go. But I think one of the show's models went overboard that she was falling all over the audience. Well, maybe that was part of her performance—the drunken porn star.

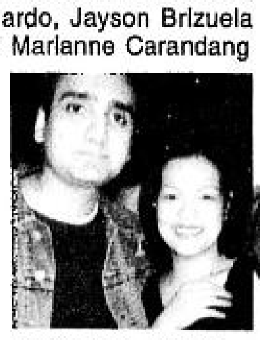
Another "spotting" shows a popular model doing the "sneaky" thing as she walked by a video jock of a popular music station, who was standing at the front row. Since the place was really packed and there was no ramp, the models walked right in front of the audience. As the model approached the veejay, she winked at him, and then slowly put her hand where it should not be. The veejay froze.

After the show, which was directed by **Raymond Villanueva**, guests had to cool down with drinks from the bar as more partyphiles in fetish gear arrived. Actually, there were more perverts than porn stars that night. "Give it to me, baby!" cried one scenester. Now if only I brought my whips and chains...

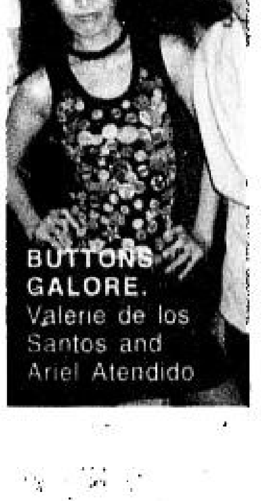
BOOB TUBE BOOBOOS. Kara Tolentino with brother Abe (sporting plastic breasts) and Pam Gonzales

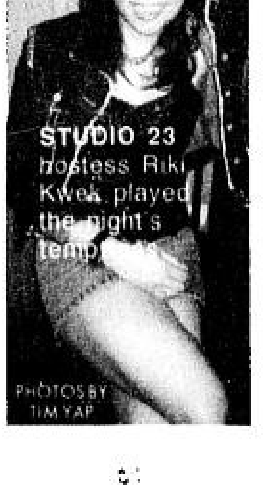
BUDDY CHEMISTRY. . GetAsia's Anna Garramendi, Troy Bernardo, Jayson Brizuela and new editor in chief Marianne Carandang

SWEET SURPRISE. Birthday gal Sarah Meier and Borgy Manotoc

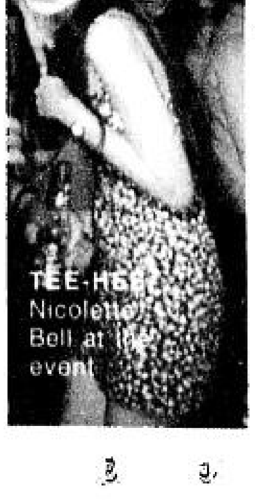

BUFFALO BLISS. Vijay Chugani and Roechelle Montenegro

MISS BENETTON
MISS BENETTON MISBEHAVES. Tessa Prieto-Valdes, Rissa Samson, Mae Young and Wilma Doesnt


BUTTONS GALORE. Valerie de los Santos and Ariel Atendido

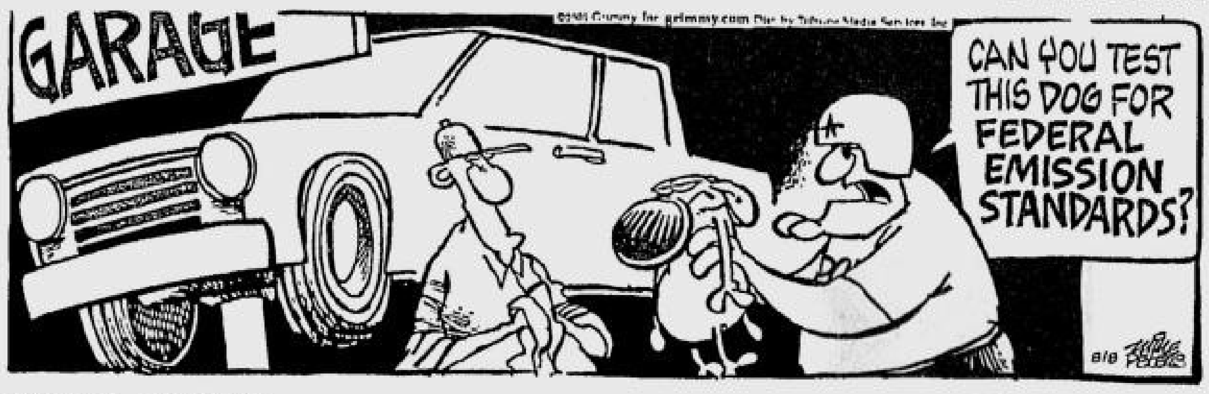

STUDIO 23 hostess Riki Kwek played the night's temp[illegible]

PHOTOS BY TIM YAP


TEE-HEE. Nicolette Bell at the event

MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


GARAGE
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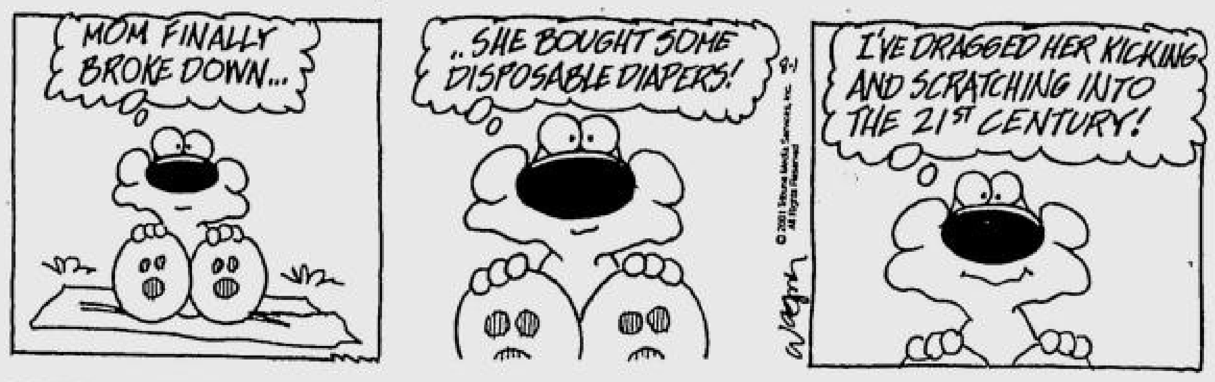
CAN YOU TEST THIS DOG FOR FEDERAL EMISSION STANDARDS?
8/8

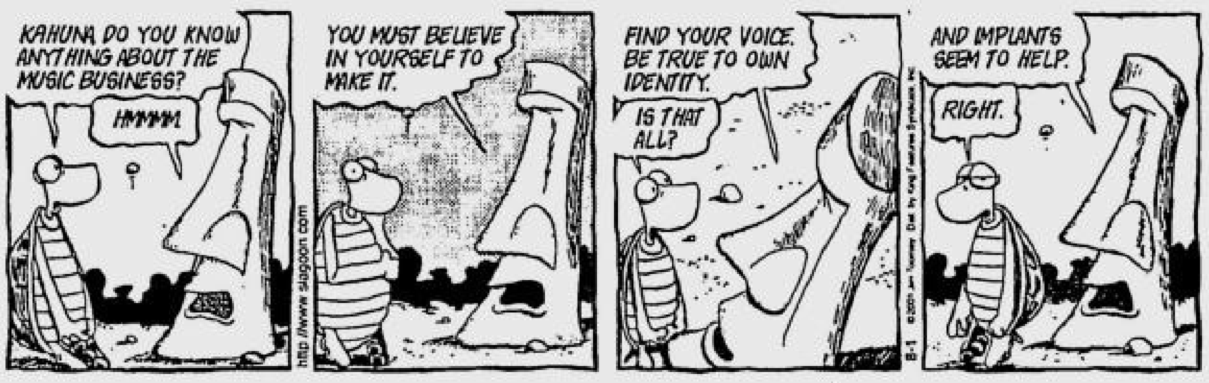
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


MOM FINALLY BROKE DOWN...
..SHE BOUGHT SOME DISPOSABLE DIAPERS!
8-1
I'VE DRAGGED HER KICKING AND SCRATCHING INTO THE 21ST CENTURY!

SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


KAHUNA, DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE MUSIC BUSINESS?
HMMMM.
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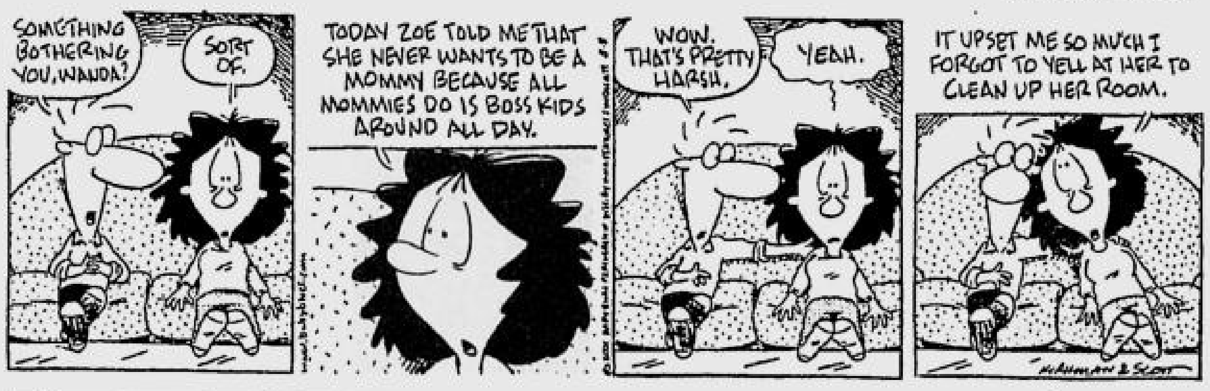
YOU MUST BELIEVE IN YOURSELF TO MAKE IT.
FIND YOUR VOICE. BE TRUE TO OWN IDENTITY.
IS THAT ALL?
8-1
AND IMPLANTS SEEM TO HELP.
RIGHT.

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


SOMETHING BOTHERING YOU, WANDA?
SORT OF.
TODAY ZOE TOLD ME THAT SHE NEVER WANTS TO BE A MOMMY BECAUSE ALL MOMMIES DO IS BOSS KIDS AROUND ALL DAY.
WOW. THAT'S PRETTY HARSH.
YEAH.
IT UPSET ME SO MUCH I FORGOT TO YELL AT HER TO CLEAN UP HER ROOM.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

,BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Raquel Welch, Bob Newhart, Al Stewart, Carol Lawrence, William Devane, Cathy Guisewite

Happy Birthday: Don't let your insecurities stand in the way. You have plenty on your plate and even more responsibility coming. It's time to open up, share your thoughts, and begin the long journey to greater success. The dedication and hard work now will pay you back enormously in the future. Your numbers: 6, 7, 23, 39, 42, 44

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Overindulgence will put you into the doghouse with your mate. Be attentive if you wish to keep the peace at home. Take some time to re-evaluate your motives and make changes if need be.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You may be given too much responsibility. Be careful your boss doesn't renege on a promise. Get agreements in writing. Don't make changes without going through the proper channels.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Luxury items will cost you dearly. Decisions made in haste will be regretted. Don't jump to conclusions about situations involving children. Look into ways of making extra cash.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You'll anger others if that moody, negative attitude persists. You will tend to complain if family doesn't bend to your way of thinking.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Time spent with your lover will be most satisfying. You may want to plan a vacation of rest, relaxation and lavish entertainment.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't trust a glib stranger trying to take your cash. Children may not be completely honest with you. Dig deeper to find out exactly why they feel they can't tell you the truth.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Partnerships may not be as they appear. Be observant. Hidden signs will indicate whom you can trust and whom you can't. Don't wear your heart on your sleeve.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't let work interfere with your personal plans. Your mate will be much harder to deal with than your boss. Take one thing at a time and don't make commitments you can't keep.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You need to be active if you want to use up all that extra energy. Get involved in competitive games that offer a rare challenge and entertainment at the same time.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You'll be concerned about your career direction and financial situation. That concern might extend to personal matters. You shouldn't underestimate your mate.

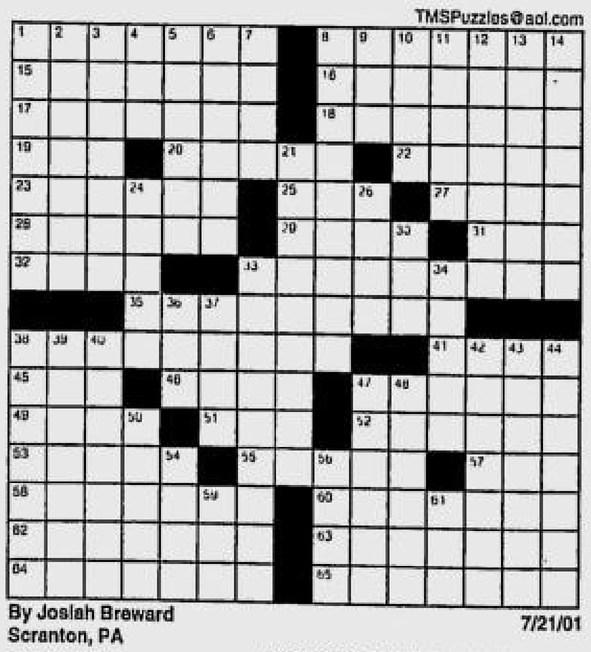
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Friends are likely to make demands. You must learn to say no regardless of the outcome. Someone is probably talking behind your back. Do what you must, but don't be taken for granted.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You will have an unreal view of your financial situation. You're only fooling yourself if you don't tighten your belt and stick to a stringent budget.

Birthday Baby: You like to do everything in a big way, and if that means being a little dramatic so be it. Your wit and caring qualities will please others, and your candor will be appreciated.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Josiah Breward
Scranton, PA

7/21/01

ACROSS
1 Inspects carefully
8 Calling a halt to
15 Constituent
16 Host Hall
17 Series of boat races
18 Damsels
19 "__ Got a Secret"
20 Nervous
22 Male and female
23 Temper
25 Nightmare street?
27 Full-grown
28 Aquatic mammals
29 Outline
31 Coll. course
32 Take a sample
33 Bout at the top of the card
35 Artificial international language
38 Personal canopies?
41 Old World wild goat
45 Get it?
46 Kelly or Whitman
47 Without much color
49 Does wrong
51 As well
52 Texas oranges
53 Set a maximum
55 Ire
57 10 of calendars
58 Rival successfully
60 Tex-Mex sauce
62 Tranquilizes
63 More lathery
64 Ocean extract
65 Groups of nine

DOWN
1 Transparent olivine
2 Heighten
3 University officers
4 Thurman of "Pulp Fiction"
5 Hunting dog
6 Penetrates
7 Laurel or Kenton
8 Roselike flowers
9 Memorable time
10 Fixer-upper phrase
11 Passover meal
12 Banished
13 Spare target, perhaps
14 "An Officer and a Gentleman" co-star
21 Divider
24 Discourage
26 Author of "Death in Venice"
30 Trawling device
33 Superlatively easygoing
34 Shazam!
36 Stitch
37 Map of building lots
38 Serving no purpose
39 "Carmen" author
40 Island in the Atlantic
42 Garden blossom
43 Put in office
44 Surgeon's bone-scrapers
47 Elixir
48 Container for cinders
50 Eliot's Marner
54 See-yal
56 Church recess
59 __ Aviv-Jaffa
61 Do monkey see monkey do

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

L	A	S	S	■	B	L	T	S	■	A	B	A	S	E
O	L	E	O	■	O	O	H	S	■	L	A	S	E	D
S	E	A	L	A	D	D	E	R	■	L	Y	I	N	G
E	E	L	■	G	E	E	R	■	M	A	L	A	D	Y
■	■	■	B	O	G	■	O	M	A	H	A	■	■	■
S	T	O	A	■	A	S	S	E	T	■	V	A	S	T
M	O	A	T	S	■	C	E	R	E	B	E	L	L	A
I	N	S	T	I	L	L	■	M	O	O	N	I	E	R
T	A	I	L	P	I	E	C	E	■	A	D	A	P	T
E	L	S	E	■	F	R	A	N	C	■	E	S	T	S
■	■	■	C	H	E	A	P	■	H	E	R	■	■	■
M	I	R	R	O	R	■	S	I	A	M	■	I	A	N
I	C	I	E	R	■	M	U	D	P	U	D	D	L	E
L	O	G	E	S	■	A	L	O	E	■	O	L	A	V
S	N	A	K	E	■	W	E	L	L	■	S	Y	N	E

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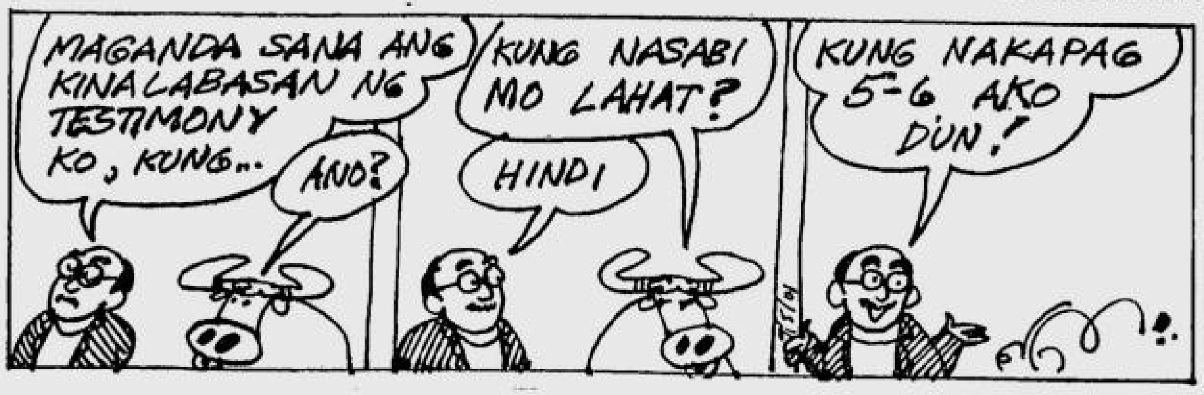
7/21/01

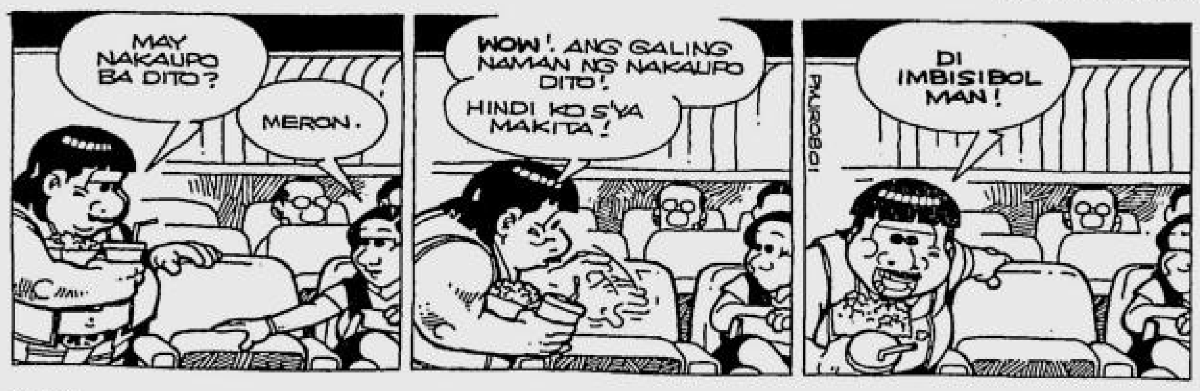
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


MAGANDA SANA ANG KINALABASAN NG TESTIMONY KO, KUNG...
ANO?
KUNG NASABI MO LAHAT?
HINDI
KUNG NAKAPAG 5-6 AKO DUN!

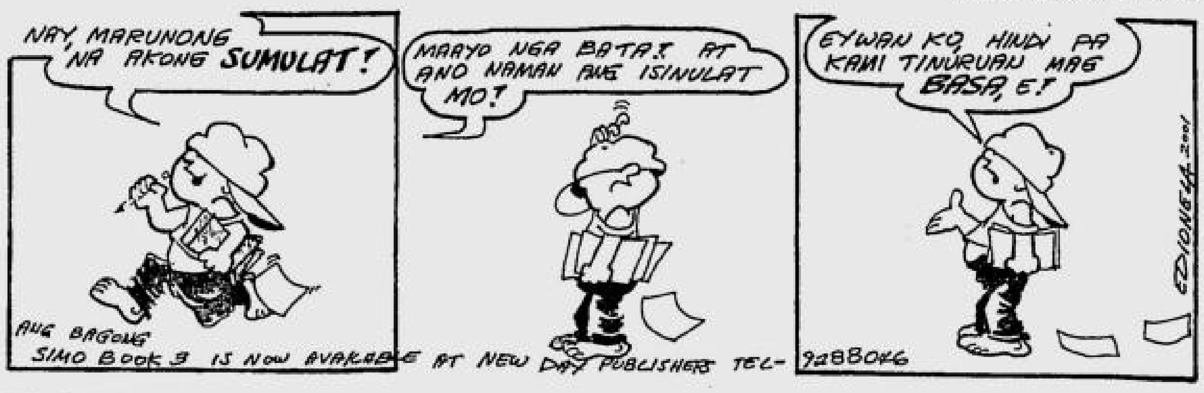
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


MAY NAKAUPO BA DITO?
MERON.
WOW! ANG GALING NAMAN NG NAKAUPO DITO!
HINDI KO S'YA MAKITA!
PUGADBABOY
DI IMBISIBOL MAN!

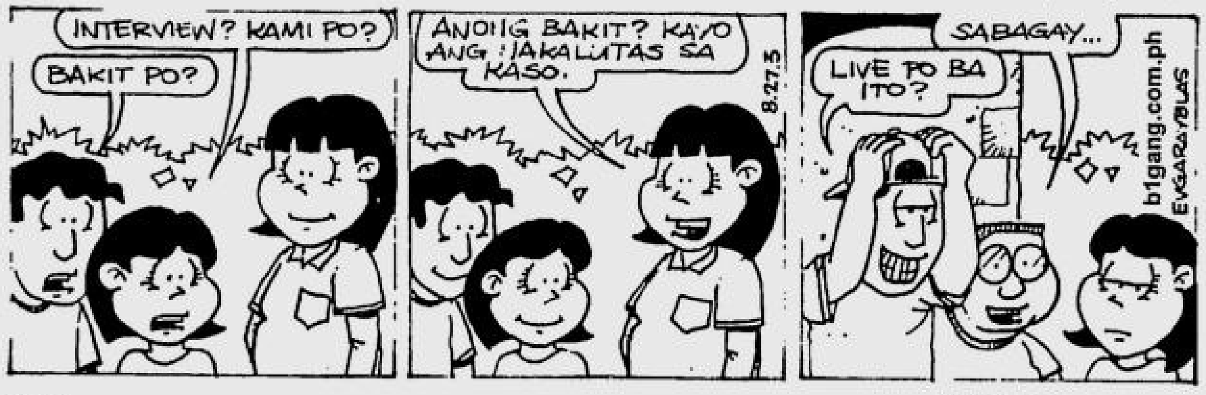
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


NAY, MARUNONG NA AKONG SUMULAT!
MARYO NGA BATA! AT ANO NAMAN ANG ISINULAT MO?
EYWAN KO, HINDI PA KAMI TINURUAN MAG BASA, E!
EDIONELA 2001
ANG BAGONG SIMO BOOK 3 IS NOW AVAILABLE AT NEW DAY PUBLISHERS TEL- 9288046

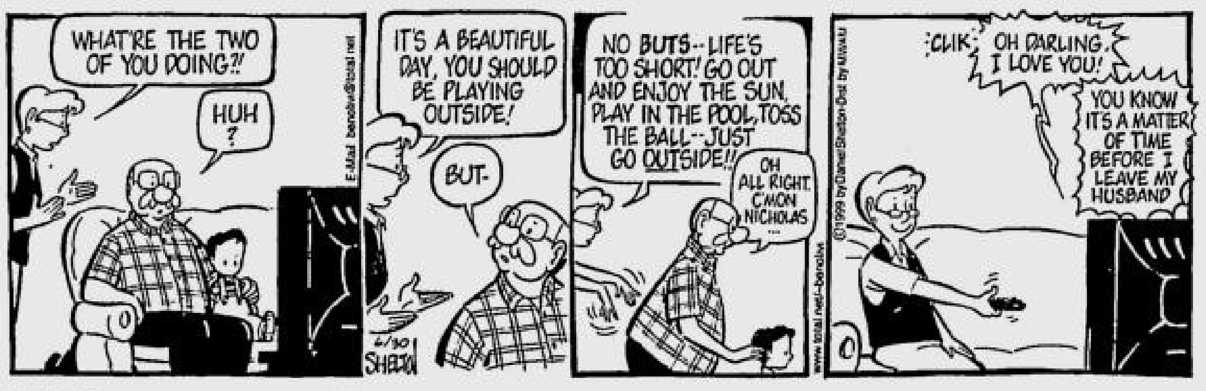
B1 GANG

BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


INTERVIEW? KAMI PO?
BAKIT PO?
ANONG BAKIT? KAYO ANG NAKALUTAS SA KASO.
8.27.3
SABAGAY...
LIVE PO BA ITO?
b1gang.com.ph
EVGARAYBLAS

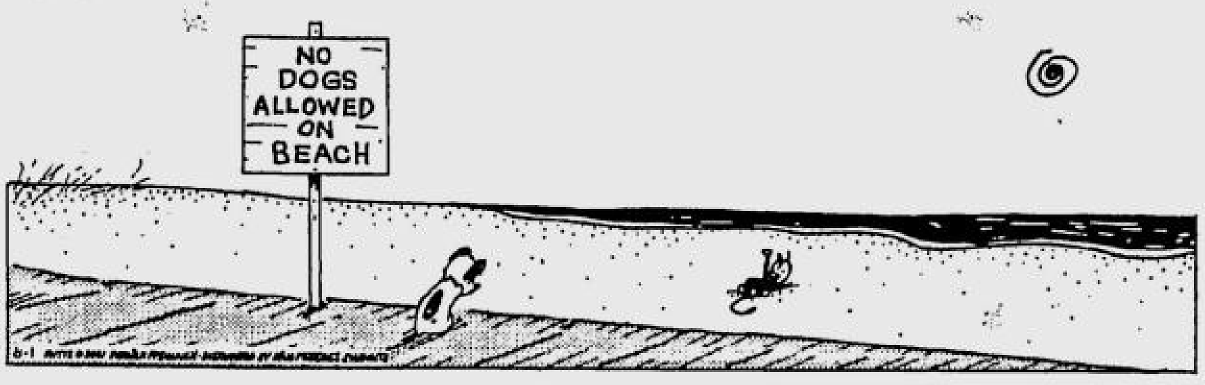
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


WHAT'RE THE TWO OF YOU DOING?!
HUH ?
IT'S A BEAUTIFUL DAY, YOU SHOULD BE PLAYING OUTSIDE!
BUT-
6/30 SHELTON
NO BUTS--LIFE'S TOO SHORT! GO OUT AND ENJOY THE SUN, PLAY IN THE POOL, TOSS THE BALL--JUST GO OUTSIDE!!
OH ALL RIGHT. C'MON NICHOLAS ...
CLIK
OH DARLING, I LOVE YOU!
YOU KNOW IT'S A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE I LEAVE MY HUSBAND

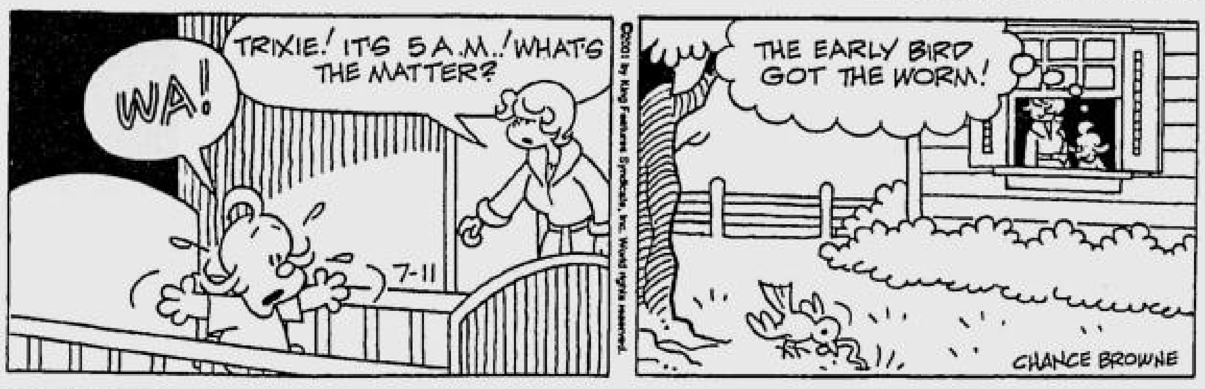
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


NO DOGS ALLOWED ON BEACH
8-1

HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


WA!
TRIXIE! IT'S 5 A.M.! WHAT'S THE MATTER?
7-11
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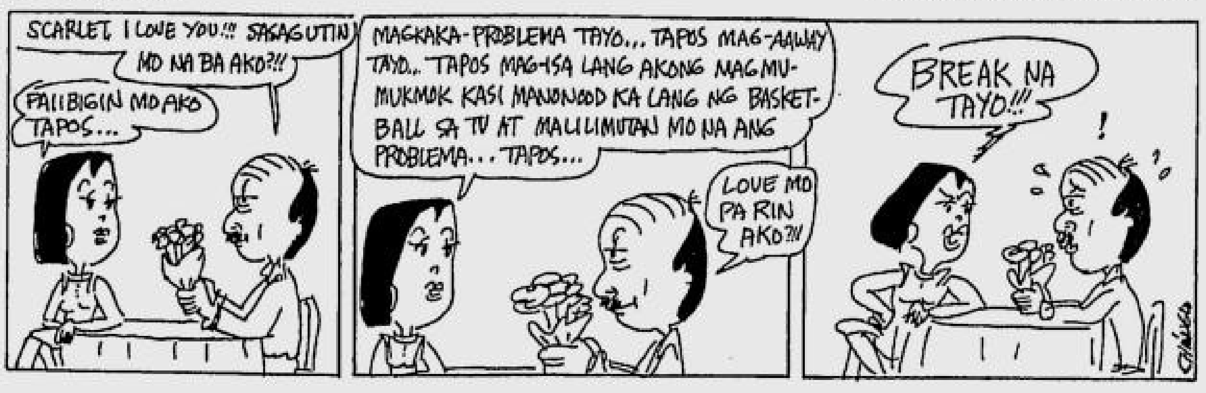
THE EARLY BIRD GOT THE WORM!
CHANCE BROWNE

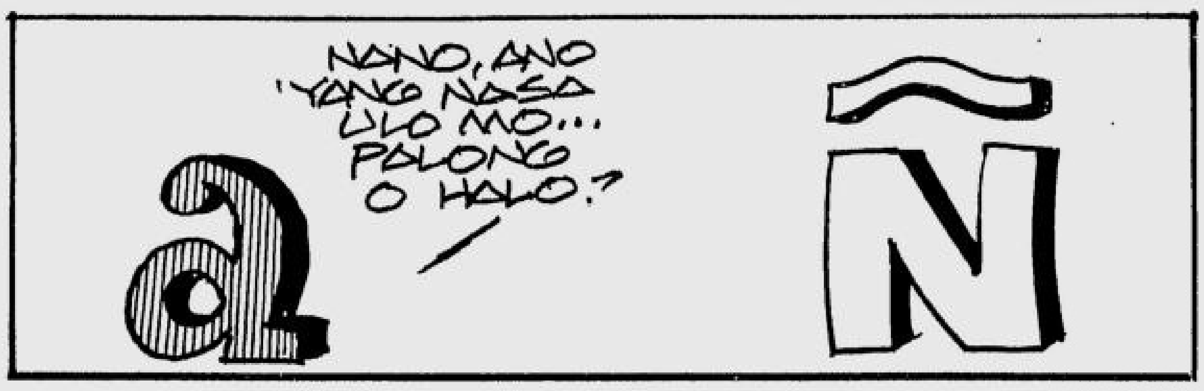
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SCARLET, I LOVE YOU!!! SASAGUTIN MO NA BA AKO?!!
PAIIBIGIN MO AKO TAPOS...
MAGKAKA-PROBLEMA TAYO... TAPOS MAG-AAWAY TAYO.. TAPOS MAG-ISA LANG AKONG MAGMUMUKMOK KASI MANONOOD KA LANG NG BASKETBALL SA TV AT MALILIMUTAN MO NA ANG PROBLEMA... TAPOS...
LOVE MO PA RIN AKO?!!
BREAK NA TAYO!!!
!

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


NONO, ANO 'YANG NASA ULO MO... PALONG O HALO?
a
Ñ

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